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THE GENERAL EPISTLES

OF

ST PETER AND ST JUDE.

Cambridge:
PRINTED BY C. J. CLAY, M.A.
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

The Cambridge Bible for Schools

GENERAL EDITOR:—J. J. S. PEROWNE, D.D.,
DEAN OF PETERBOROUGH.

THE GENERAL EPISTLES OF

ST PETER & ST JUDE,

WITH NOTES AND INTRODUCTION

1100

BY

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EDITED FOR THE SYNDICS OF THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

Cambridge:
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

London: CAMBRIDGE WAREHOUSE, 17, PATERNOSTER ROW
Cambridge: DEIGHTON, BELL, AND CO.

1880

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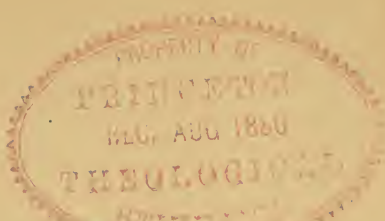
*** The Text adopted in this Edition is that of Dr Scrivener's *Cambridge Paragraph Bible.* A few variations from the ordinary Text, chiefly in the spelling of certain words, and in the use of italics, will be noticed. For the principles adopted by Dr Scrivener as regards the printing of the Text see his Introduction to the *Paragraph Bible*, published by the Cambridge University Press.



INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRAINING OF THE DISCIPLE.

1. THE early years of the Apostle whose writings are now before us appear to have been passed in the village of Bethsaida (=*Fishtown*, or more literally *Home of Fish*), on the West coast of the Sea of Galilee, not far from Chorazin and Capernaum (John i. 44). Its exact position cannot be determined with any certainty, but it has been identified with the modern *'Ain et Tabigah*, and must be distinguished from the town of the same name on the North-Eastern shore of the Lake, which, after it had been enlarged and rebuilt by Philip the Tetrarch, was known as Bethsaida Julias, the latter name having been[1] given to it in honour of the daughter of the Emperor Augustus.

Among the fishermen from whose occupation the town derived its name was one who bore the name either of Jona (John i. 42; Matt. xvi. 17) or Joannes (in the best MSS. of John xxi. 15—17), as being a Grecised reproduction of the old Hebrew Jochanan, or Jehohanan (1 Chron. vi. 9, 10), and conveying, like its Greek equivalents, Theodorus or Dorotheus, the meaning of "the gift of God." An uncertain tradition (Coteler, *Constt. Apost.* II. 63) gives his mother's name also as Joanna. It is probable, but not certain, from the priority given to his name in all lists of the

[1] The distinctness of the two places is seen in the record of the feeding of the Five Thousand, which took place near the Eastern Bethsaida (Luke ix. 10—17), and was followed by the passage of the disciples across the lake to that on the Western shore. (Mark vi. 45.)

disciples, that the Apostle was their first-born son. The name which they gave him, Symeon (Acts xv. 14; 2 Pet. i. 1), commonly appearing, like his father's, in an abbreviated form, as Simon, had been made popular by the achievements of the captain of the Maccabean house who had borne it (1 Macc. v. 17), and by the virtues of Simon the Priest (Ecclus. l. 1—20), and not to go further than the records of the New Testament, appears there as borne by Simon, or Symeon, the brother of the Lord (Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3), Simon the Canaanite (Matt. x. 4; Mark iii. 18), known also by the Greek equivalent of that name, Zelotes (Luke vi. 15; Acts i. 13), Simon of Cyrene (Matt. xxvii. 32; Mark xv. 21; Luke xxiii. 26), Simon the leper (Matt. xxvi. 6; Mark xiv. 3; John xii. 1), Simon the Pharisee (Luke vii. 40), Simon the Tanner (Acts x. 6—32), and Simon the Sorcerer of Samaria (Acts viii. 9). The fact that his brother, probably his younger brother, bore the Greek name of Andreas, is significant, like that of Philippos, borne by another native of Bethsaida (John i. 44), as indicating the prevalence of that language along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and as making it probable that a certain colloquial familiarity with it was common both to the sons of Jona and the other disciples as to our Lord Himself.

The date of the Apostle's birth cannot be fixed with certainty, but as we find him married and probably with children (comp. Matt. xix. 29), about the year A.D. 27 or 28, we may fairly assume that his life ran parallel in its earlier years to that of our Lord and the Baptist. He was not sent to study the law or the traditions of the elders at the feet of Gamaliel or any other Rabbi of the Schools of Jerusalem, and when he appeared before the Sanhedrin was looked on as an "unlettered layman" (*ἰδιώτης καὶ ἀγράμματος*, Acts iv. 13). This did not imply, however, an entire absence of education. Well-nigh every Jewish Synagogue had a school attached to it, and there, as well as in the Sabbath services, the young Symeon may have learnt, like Timotheus, to know the Holy Writings daily (2 Tim. iii. 15). He was destined, however, to follow what had probably been his father's calling. The absence of any mention of that father in

the Gospel history suggests the inference that the two brothers had been left orphans at a comparatively early age, and had begun their career as fishermen under the protection of Zebedæus and his wife Salome (Matt. xxvii. 56; Mark xv. 40, xvi. 1), with whose sons, James and John (*Joannes* and *Jacôbus*), we find them in partnership, himself also probably of Bethsaida or of some neighbouring village. Zebedæus appears to have been a man of some wealth. He had his "hired servants" to assist his sons and their partners (Mark i. 20). His wife ministered to the Lord out of her "substance" (Luke viii. 3). One of their sons was known (if we adopt the commonly received identification of the "other disciple" of John xviii. 15) to the high-priest Caiaphas. We cannot think, looking back from the standpoint of their later history, without a deep interest, of the companionship thus brought about, the interchange of devout hopes, the union in fervent prayers, which bound together the sons of Zebedee and those of Jona in a life-long friendship. In their early youth they must have felt the influence of the agitation caused by the revolt of Judas of Galilee (A.D. 6), waking, as it did, Messianic expectations which it could not satisfy, and have been thus led to study the writings of Moses and the prophets for the outlines of a truer and nobler ideal (John i. 41). If the child is "father of the man" we cannot doubt that they were even then, before the preaching of the Baptist, among those who "looked for the consolation of Israel" and "waited" for its "redemption" (Luke ii. 25—38). John was apparently the youngest of the three friends, and, as will be seen in many instances as we proceed, the affection which bound him to Simon, each with elements of character that were complementary of those possessed by the other, was of a singularly enduring and endearing nature.

When the Gospel history opens Peter was living not at Bethsaida but at Capernaum, with his wife and his wife's mother (Matt. viii. 14; Mark i. 29; Luke iv. 38). That he had children is, perhaps, implied in the language addressed to him by our Lord in Matt. xix. 29, but if so, nothing is known of them. Of his wife too but little is known, but there are traces of her living with him during his work as an Apostle (1 Cor. ix.

5; and probably 1 Pet. v. 13), and an interesting and not incredible tradition makes her the companion of his martyrdom.

The preaching of the Baptist drew three at least of the friends to take their place among the multitudes who came to him on the banks of the Jordan confessing their sins. Two of the four, Andrew and John, were present when he pointed to One whom they knew as Jesus, the son of the carpenter of Nazareth, as He returned from the Temptation in the Wilderness, with the words, "Behold the Lamb of God" (John i. 36). Their belief in their teacher led them to follow Him who was thus designated, and the interview which followed, the "gracious words" that came from His lips (Luke iv. 22), the authority with which He spoke (Matt. vii. 29), induced them, prior to any attestation of His claim by signs and wonders, to accept Him as the long-expected Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed of the Lord. Each apparently started in quest, the one of his brother and the other of his friend, to whom they knew that the tidings would be welcome, and Andrew was the first to find him and to bring him to the Teacher whom they had thus owned. As he drew near, the Rabbi whom he was henceforth to know as his Lord and Master, looked on him, and, as reading the latent possibilities of his character and determining his future work, addressed him in words which gave him the name that was afterwards to supersede that which he had received in infancy, "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas" (John i. 40—42). The use of the Aramaic form seems to imply that the Lord spoke to him in that language, but the familiarity of the Galileans with Greek made the equivalent Peter the more familiar name, even during our Lord's ministry and still more afterwards[1]. It is probable that, as in the changes of name in the Old Testament, Abram into Abraham (Gen. xvii. 5), Jacob

[1] "Cephas," however, appears to have retained its hold, as "Symeon" did, on the Church of Jerusalem, and was therefore adopted by those who looked to him as their leader in the parties at Corinth (1 Cor. i. 12), and is used of him by St Paul in writing to that Church (1 Cor. ix. 5, xv. 5). The Hebrew word, which meets us in Job xxx. 6, Jer. iv. 29, has the meaning of a projecting cliff or rock, and has affinities in non-Semitic languages, as in Sanscrit *kap-ala*, Greek κεφ-αλη, Latin *caput*, German *Kopf* and *Gibfel*.

into Israel (Gen. xxxii. 28), both names were significant. He had been Simeon, a hearer only (comp. Gen. xxix. 33), knowing God as "by the hearing of the ear" (Job xlii. 5), Bar-Jona, the "son of Jehovah's Grace:" now he was to be as a "rock-man," a "stone" in the Temple of God, built up with other living stones (so he came afterwards to understand the mystic meanings of the name) upon Him who now spoke to him as the true rock, the firm and sure foundation (1 Pet. ii. 4, 5). (See Watkins' Note on John i. 42, in Bishop Ellicott's *New Testament Commentary*.)

To the company of the four friends thus united in the fellowship of a new faith were added two others, probably already within the circle of companionship, Philip, of the same town as the sons of Jona, and his friend Nathanael or Bartholomew of Cana[1]. With them we may believe, though he is not specially named, Peter was present at the marriage feast of Cana (John ii. 2), at the Passover feast in Jerusalem that followed shortly on it (John ii. 17), and in Judæa (John iii. 22), and in the journey through Samaria (John iv. 8). There is no trace, however, of their presence in the next visit of the Lord Jesus to Jerusalem at the unnamed feast of John v. 1, and it was probably during His absence from Galilee on that occasion and because of it, that the four partners returned to their old calling on the Sea of Galilee, not that their faith in Him had grown weaker, but that they waited till He should declare Himself. In the meantime He went from Jerusalem to Nazareth (Luke iv. 14), and from Nazareth to Capernaum (Luke iv. 31), which was now the home of one of them, and possibly of all four. They had been fishing during the night, and without success. Their boats were drawn up to the shore that they might rest for the day. Two, Simeon and Andrew, were making a final attempt with the net, which they cast more cautiously into the water near the shore. The others

[1] The assumption of identity rests on the facts (1) that the name Nathanael does not appear in the Synoptic Gospels nor Bartholomew in St John; (2) that the names of Philip and Bartholomew appear in the list of the Twelve in Matt. x. 3, Mark iii. 18, Luke vi. 14 in close combination, as if there were some special bonds of intimacy uniting them; (3) that Bar-tholomæus is, like Bar-jona and Bar-timæus, an obvious patronymic.

were cleaning and mending their nets on the assumption that the day's work was over. The Teacher stepped into Peter's boat and taught the people, preaching, we may believe, the Gospel of repentance and forgiveness. Then followed the command to put out once again for another venture, and the draught of a great multitude of fishes, in which he could but see the working of a supernatural power; and the awe-stricken disciple, penetrated with a deeper consciousness of his own evil than he had felt even under the preaching of the Baptist, threw himself at the feet of Jesus with the cry, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." It was met, as all utterances of true repentance are met, with the assuring words, "Fear not;" with the announcement of a new life-work which was to take the place of the old, and of which that older work was to be as a parable full of meaning, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men." He and his friends were to be "fishers of men" in the world's stormy seas (Matt. iv. 18—22; Mark i. 16—20; Luke v 1—11)[1]. From that time he forsook all and followed Christ.

It was in almost immediate sequence to the call that the house in which he and Andrew and his wife and her mother dwelt was honoured by the presence of his Lord, and he witnessed, in the healing of the last-named and of many others, the "signs and wonders" to which he appeals in Acts ii. 22 as an attestation that Jesus of Nazareth was "a man approved of God." He and they learnt also what was the secret of that power to heal, how the life of daily ministration was sustained by the night of secret communing with God (Mark i. 35—39). The work to which he had been called went on. As contemplating a wider extension which should, symbolically at least, include all the families of Israel, the Twelve were chosen, after another night spent by the Lord Jesus on the mountain height in solitary prayer (Mark iii. 13; Luke vi. 12); and, if we may take the unvarying order of the names in all the four lists

[1] I have written on the assumption that the three Evangelists report the same incident. If the variations in St Luke's record lead to the conclusion that he speaks of a different call, we must infer that the disciples again returned to their employment after that narrated by the other Evangelists.

given in the New Testament as indicating an actual priority, the son of Jona found himself chosen as the Coryphæus of the chosen band who were, though not as yet sent forth, chosen for the office of Envoys or Apostles of the King of Israel (Mark iii. 7—19). Confining our attention to the facts in which his name appears associated with some characteristic word or act, we note his presence with the two sons of Zebedee in the death-chamber of the daughter of Jairus (Mark v. 37; Luke viii. 51); the mission to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, not as yet to the Gentiles or the Samaritans (Matt. x. 5), in which, as the Apostles were sent two and two together (Mark vi. 7), it is natural to infer from their earlier and later companionship (John xx. 3, xxi. 7, 20; Acts iii. 1, viii. 14) that he was associated with the beloved disciple; the intensity of faith which led him, after the feeding of the Five Thousand, when he saw his Lord's form drawing near the boat, walking in the darkness of the stormy night on the water of the sea of Galilee, to trust himself, at his Lord's bidding, to the tempestuous waves; the weakness of that faith which shewed itself when he began to sink and called forth the cry "Lord, save me" (Matt. xiv. 28—33). The memory of that deliverance was, we may believe, still fresh in his mind when, after the hard sayings in the synagogue at Capernaum which had repelled many of the disciples, he met his Lord's appeal, "Will ye also go away?" with the question, "Lord, to whom shall we go?", with the confession "Thou hast the words of eternal life; and we have believed and have known that Thou art the Holy One of God[1]" (John vi. 66—71). The signs and wonders that followed, the healing of the Syro-Phœnician maiden (Matt. xv. 21—28; Mark vii. 24—30), of the blind man in the Apostle's own city of Bethsaida (Mark viii. 22—26), the feeding of the four thousand (Matt. xv. 32—38; Mark viii. 1—9), deepened the faith which had been thus uttered. The disciples had been led beyond the limits of the chosen land, and of their usual work as preachers, through the regions of Tyre and Sidon, through the latter city itself

[1] I follow the reading of the better MSS. rather than that of the Received Text.

(Mark vii. 31 in the best MSS.), and were returning by the slopes of Hermon to the district round Cæsarea Philippi. The question was put to them by their Lord, as if to test what they thought of the floating rumours that had met their ears in every town and village, "Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?" They reproduced those rumours. Some said that He was John the Baptist, and some that He was Elias, and some that He was Jeremiah, and some, more vaguely, that one of the old Prophets was risen from the dead. It was given to Peter to make, in answer to the question that followed, "But whom say ye that I am?", a fuller confession of his faith than had yet been uttered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. xvi. 13—19).

The words that followed on that confession have been the battlefield of endless controversies between Romish and Protestant theologians. To discuss these lies outside our scope, but the promise thus made to him is too closely connected with the development of the Apostle's spiritual life, and, it may be added, with that spiritual life as seen in the teaching of the Epistle, to be altogether passed over. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven." The words reminded him of the manner in which he had been received on his first call to the discipleship. Now, as then, it was not through any merely human influence ("flesh and blood"), the testimony of the Baptist, or his brother, or his friends, that he had been led to this confession. The "Father in Heaven," to whom his Master had taught him to pray (Matt. vi. 9), had brought that direct immediate conviction to his soul. One who had the "words of eternal life" could not be other than the Christ in all the fulness of the significance which that title had acquired.

And now he was to see the meaning of the new name Cephas, or Petros, that had been then given him. He was a *stone*, one with that *rock* with which he was now joined by an indissoluble union. As with the like utterance in John ii., "Destroy *this* temple," the words were either left to interpret themselves to the minds that thought over them, or were emphasized by

tone or gesture. On that rock the new Society, the Ecclesia, the congregation of the faithful was to be built. As the rock-built castle of the Tetrarch Philip, which was then in view, might seem able to defy the legions of an earthly army, so of that *Ecclesia* it should be true that the gates of Hell, the forces of the unseen powers of Hades and of Death, should not prevail against it. And now, too, he was told that he was qualified for his admission to the office of a Scribe, instructed to the kingdom of Heaven (Matt. xiii. 52). The keys of that kingdom were to be given to him, as the keys of the treasures of the house of the Interpreter were given to the Jewish Scribe when he was admitted as a teacher of the Law. His power to bind and to loose, to declare this or that to be lawful or unlawful, obligatory or optional, was to be not less, but more authoritative than that of Hillel, or Shammai, or Gamaliel; for while their interpretations rested on conflicting, uncertain, and often ambiguous traditions, his would come from the insight given to him by the Father of lights, and so whatsoever he should bind on earth should be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever he should loose on earth should be loosed in Heaven (Matt. xvi. 19).

I have given what seems the most natural explanation of the memorable promise. There is not the shadow of a doubt that the distinction between πέτρος and πέτρα is such as has been indicated above[1]. If we turn to the Apostle's own language we find that he reproduced the leading thought of the words in his First Epistle. The disciples of Christ are as "living stones" built upon the chief corner-stone, and that corner-stone, in its unity, is identified with the "rock" on which the Church is built, though it is a rock of offence to those who stumble on it in their disobedience (1 Pet. ii. 4—8). And if he interpreted one part of the promise in his written teaching, he no less clearly interpreted the other by his spoken words in the case of Cornelius. It had been held unlawful by the Jewish Scribes for a Jew to feed with a man uncircumcised, or even to enter into his house. God had taught him,—again we note the revelation that came not by "flesh and blood," but from his Father

[1] See Liddell and Scott, s. v. πέτρος.

in Heaven,—not to call any man common or unclean. Hillel and Shammai had "bound." It was given to him to "loose," and to declare that the restriction on which they laid stress had passed away for ever. The interpretation which has assumed (1) that the promise made the Apostle himself the "rock" on which the Church was built, (2) that it conveyed to him a permanent supremacy and infallible authority, (3) that the supremacy and infallibility were both transmitted by him to his successors, (4) that those successors are to be found in the Bishops of Rome and in them only, hardly deserves a notice, except as an instance of a fantastic development worthy of the foremost place in any exhibition of the monstrosities of exegesis.

How little the promise conveyed a personal freedom from error was seen but a few hours, or days, after it had been given. His Lord, as if recognising that he had reached a stage of spiritual education in which the mystery of victory won by suffering, and life rising out of death, might be made known to him and his fellow-disciples, had spoken to them of His coming sufferings. The eager, impetuous love of the disciple repelled the very thought with an indignant horror, and seems to have looked on the words as the utterance of a morbid depression, "God be gracious to thee, Lord. This shall not be to thee." It would not do for the other disciples and for the people to hear such disheartening words. The over-bold remonstrance drew from his Lord's lips a rebuke which has no parallel to its severity in the whole course of our Lord's ministry. He heard the very words which he then knew, or afterwards learnt, had been addressed to the Tempter, when he too suggested that the crown of the King was to be obtained without the cross, not by obedience to the Father's will, but by doing homage to the Power of evil. He had made himself as the rock of offence, a stumbling-block in the King's path. His mind was set, not on the things of God, but on the things of men; "Flesh and blood" were regaining their power over him (Matt. xvi. 22, 23). He needed to be taught that the condition of discipleship was that he must be prepared to deny himself and take up the cross and follow Christ. (Matt. xvi. 24.)

It would seem as if the next stage in the spiritual education of the Apostle came to strengthen the faith which had shewn itself so unstable and lacking in discernment. On the high mountain, which could scarcely be other than one of the peaks of Hermon, he and the two brother Apostles who with him were the chosen of the chosen ones, saw the vision of the excellent glory, and heard the forms in which they recognised the Lawgiver and the Tishbite speak of the "decease" which their Lord should accomplish in Jerusalem, and the voice which came from Heaven confirming the confession of his faith, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." The moment was one of ecstasy and rapture, and partly, therefore, one of a dream-like want of calm and reflective thought. He was heavy with sleep, and when he looked up and saw the bright forms in the act of departing, he sought to perpetuate that which was in its very nature but a transient manifestation. It was "good" for them to be there and thus. Would it not be well that Moses and Elijah should remain as witnesses to the Christ, and in their own persons take part in the establishment of His Kingdom; to set up three tabernacles, to which men might go, as the Israelites had gone of old to that in which Moses had communed with the Lord of Israel? He knew not what he said, and the Voice from the clouds, with its emphatic "Hear him," taught him that the work of Moses and Elijah belonged to the past, and not to the present or the future (Matt. xvii. 1—13; Mark ix. 2—13; Luke ix. 28—36). Assuming the genuineness of the Second Epistle which bears his name, it bears testimony to the indelible impression which that vision left upon his mind. It taught him, as he looked back on it, that he had not followed "cunningly-devised fables." He looked on it as an initiation into the higher mysteries of the Kingdom, as a pledge and earnest of the glory to be revealed hereafter. He learnt to think of his own death as being, like his Lord's, but a "decease" or "departure," not a destruction, or suspension, of the energies of life; of his own body as being, also like his Lord's, a "tabernacle" sanctified by the indwelling presence of the Eternal Spirit (see notes on 2 Pet. i. 16—21).

The next incident in which St Peter's name is brought before us presents a strange contrast to that which we have just been dwelling on. We are no longer on the "holy mount," but in the house at Capernaum. The question which presents itself is not as to the glory of the Kingdom, but the payment of the didrachma or Temple-rate (the half-shekel of Exod. xxx. 13) to its official collector. In answer to their question whether his Master would pay that rate, the disciple had given an unthinking answer in the affirmative. As the sequel shews, he was not wrong in so speaking, but he had not reflected on the nature of the payment, or on his Master's relation to the claim. He had not learnt the lesson that the children are free from the tribute which is taken as from strangers, that a compulsory payment to the Temple was at variance with the freedom of the new Kingdom, that the Lord of the Temple was of all those children the last from whom it could be claimed. That truth was one, which conveyed for the present in parables and dark sayings, was to sink into his heart as a new germ of thought. In the meantime, as the payment came under the head of "things indifferent" enforced by a legitimate authority, it was right to avoid the "offence" which would have been caused by a premature assertion either of the general principle, or of the special ground on which the Son of Man might have claimed exemption (Matt. xvii. 24—27). Taking this as the true reading of the teaching thus impressed on his mind, it is not too bold to trace its after influence in the disciple's own precepts to all who were placed in a like conflict between their own sense of the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and their duty to earthly rulers, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.....As free, yet not using your freedom for a cloke of baseness, but as the servants of God" (see notes on 1 Pet. ii. 13—16).

He had been taught to think of himself as connected with the Ecclesia, the Church, the Congregation, which Christ came to build on Himself as the one foundation. He was now to be taught what were the laws that were to govern that Society. Offences must need come. How were they to be

dealt with? First, he was told, by personal, secret, loving remonstrance, then by a reference to two or three impartial and disinterested friends as arbitrators, then, if this failed, by the action of the Society as such, "If he neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church, and if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as the heathen man and the publican" (Matt. xviii. 17). Its decision on what was right or wrong in such cases (it was assumed, of course, that the decision was not at variance with the Divine law), was to be a new example of the power to bind and loose of which he had heard before, exercised in this case collectively, as before individually. The power, whatever might be its nature or limits, was not his alone, but was extended to the whole society, of which he was but an individual member. The whole line of thought was clearly new to the disciple's mind. He mused on the responsibilities of which it spoke, and wanted further guidance. What was the limit of the forgiveness of personal wrongs? When was this to cease, and the judicial discipline of the *Ecclesia* to come into operation? He was disposed, after the manner of Jewish casuists, perhaps with the recollection of the "seven times" of Prov. xxiv. 16, of the "three" and the "four transgressions" of Amos i. 3, floating in his thoughts, to fix a quantitative, numerical standard, "How often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him: until seven times?" Again he was led onward, first by the direct answer, "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven," and then by the memorable parable of the Two Debtors, to see that no such quantitative measurement was applicable to the conditions of the case, that there is no fixed limit to the forgiveness of personal wrong, that that forgiveness must be in the heart of the members or representatives of the Ecclesia, even when they inflict their punishment, or exclude the offender from their fellowship. Their aim in all such discipline is to be that of "gaining" the brother whom they are compelled to condemn (Matt. xviii. 15). They are not even, in that case, to despair of his restoration. Though he may be to them as a heathen and a publican, they are to deal with him, not as the Scribes and Pharisees dealt with those

who were so named, but after the pattern of Christ's dealing. Is it too much to think that we may trace the reflex of the lesson so learnt in the mingling of sternness and pity in the words spoken to the Sorcerer of Samaria, "Repent therefore, if haply the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.....Thou art in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity" (Acts viii. 22, 23), in the counsel which he gives to the Christians to whom he writes to cherish in themselves that "fervent love" which "shall cover the multitude of sins" (1 Pet. iv. 8)? May we not venture to surmise even that he must have been reminded of the method of procedure thus set forth, when he himself came under its operation, when private remonstrance failed, and his brother Apostle had to tell his fault to the Church and become the mouth-piece of its judgment (Gal. ii. 11—14)? If this were so, it offers an adequate explanation of his frank acceptance of the rebuke, and how it was that St Paul also "gained his brother" by his righteous boldness.

Confining ourselves, as before, to incidents in which St Peter's name is mentioned, but not forgetting that he probably bore a leading part also in the words and acts with which the disciples were collectively connected, we note, as next in order, the question which he put after he had witnessed the failure of a bright promise in the young ruler who had great possessions, and had heard his Lord's warnings against the hindrances which wealth presented to any true entrance into the kingdom of God. He and his brother disciples look back on the day when they had abandoned their little stock-in-trade of boats and nets, their home and its settled life, and they seem to themselves entitled to some special reward. They state their claim and ask their question: "Lo, we have left all and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?" (Matt. xix. 16—27.) The answer comes to them in words spoken as with a sad, serious irony, as being all that they were then able to receive, and waiting for the interpretation of experience, that their true meaning might be read clearly. Those who had "left house or wife (here we trace, probably, a special reference to the questioner), or brethren, or parents (here a special reference to the sons of Zebedee), or chil-

dren," should "receive a hundredfold more in this present time." With this, indicating, as by one master-touch, that the picture drawn was not to be taken as implying a time of earthly prosperity and success, we find added in the report, which we may legitimately connect more closely than the other with St Peter's recollections, the significant words "with persecutions" (Mark x. 30). New homes there might be, but they were to be homes for the hunted exile; new kindred and friends in the fellowship of Christ, but they were to be given to those who had found that a man's foes were those of his own household. To this, in St Matthew's report (xix. 28) there was added the promise, mysterious and symbolical in its language, that the questioner and his fellow disciples "in the regeneration, when the Son of Man should sit on the throne of His glory," should share that glory with Him, and themselves "also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Here also we trace the impression left by the words in the later utterances of the disciple. That "regeneration," not of the individual soul only, but of the whole order of the universe, what was it but the "restitution of all things" which appears in St Peter's speech in Acts iii. 21, the "salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" of 1 Pet. i. 5, the "new heavens and new earth" of 2 Pet. iii. 13? That promise of a kingly throne, do we not find its echoes in the "crown of glory which fadeth not away" of 1 Pet. v. 4, in the belief that he too would be "a sharer in the glory that was about to be revealed" (1 Pet. i. 5)?

The next stage in the special education of the disciple meets us when the two sons of Jona and of Zebedee were with their Lord on the Mount of Olives. They had heard the words which must have dashed to the ground many of the hopes they had cherished when they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear, and told them as they looked with admiration on the stately buildings of the Temple that "not one stone should remain upon another which should not be broken down" (Mark xiii. 2; Matt. xxiv. 2; Luke xxi. 6). They came with their questions privately, as if half shrinking from the disclosure to others of what they yet longed to know themselves.

"Tell us what shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" They heard the great prophetic discourse which prepared them for a time of war and pestilence and earthquakes and tribulations, which told them that the Gospel must first be proclaimed to all the Heathen as well as to Israel (Matt. xxiv. 14), which gave them mysterious hints (these also to be interpreted by experience) as to the signs that were to precede the destruction of the holy city, which left them with no clearly marked note of time as to the interval which was to elapse between that destruction and the glorious Advent. Of that teaching we find traces alike in the certain expectation in 1 Pet. i. 13, of the "revelation of Jesus Christ;" in the prominence given in 1 Pet. iii. 20; 2 Pet. ii. 5, iii. 6, 7, to the "days of Noah," of which he had then heard as analogous to the days of the Son of Man (Matt. xxiv. 37); in the belief that the day of the Lord would come "as a thief in the night" (2 Pet. iii. 10); that "the heavens themselves" should pass away (2 Pet. iii. 10); and in the patient faith which saw in the delay of that Coming only a proof of the long-suffering of God, with whom "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Pet. iii. 8).

It is not without significance, as indicating the apparent purpose to bring the two friends into closest companionship at a time when one was soon to stand in need of the comfort and sympathy of the other, that Peter and John were sent together to prepare the room in which the disciples were to eat their last Passover with their Lord before He suffered (Luke xxii. 8). We can picture to ourselves how they would commune together of all that they had seen and heard during the excitement of the previous days, with what vague expectations of suffering and of glory they would be looking forward to that Paschal meal. Peter's acts and words at that Last Supper were eminently characteristic. There had been a dispute among the disciples which of them should be accounted greatest, in which we can scarcely doubt that his claims were questioned, and, perhaps, also asserted. Again they heard the warning which told them that all such disputes were unseemly and out of harmony for

those who were all alike called to eat at their Master's table and sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke xxii. 30). Words were followed by acts. The disciple saw his Master take on Himself the garb and the office of a menial slave. Girded with the towel of such a slave, holding the basin which was provided for the customary ablutions of the feast, He went from one disciple to another and washed the feet which had been soiled in the dusty roads and streets that led from Olivet to that upper chamber in Jerusalem. He came, apparently, to Peter last, and was met by words which recall to our memory the confession of his sinfulness in Luke v. 8. The Apostle shrank from allowing Him whom he had confessed as the Son of God to perform for him that humiliating office. Others might accept it, but not he. Not even the warning words, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," restrained him from following up his first question of surprise, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" with the peremptory refusal, "Thou shalt not wash my feet while the world lasts." The symbolical, we may almost say the sacramental, character of the Act was suggested in words the meaning of which he was to learn by the light of what followed, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." And then, in the characteristic vehemence of one who sought above all things to avoid contact with any thing "common or unclean" (Acts x. 14), he went beyond the offered act, and, here again "not knowing what he said," asked that hands and head might share in that washing on which so much depended, and was met by the assurance that as having been plunged in the cleansing waters of Baptism (afterwards he might come to see the cleansing in the blood of Christ), he needed only that washing of the feet which represented the daily renewal of the soul from its daily stains, and would then be "clean every whit" (John xiii. 1—16). I do not think it is fanciful to see something like an allusive reference even to the outward incidents of this history in the remarkable word (ἐγκομβώσασθε) which St Peter uses when he exhorts those to whom he writes to be "clothed with humility," to *gird themselves* with that lowliness as his Lord had girded Himself with

the towel on that night of sorrow (1 Pet. v. 5); or to its inner meaning in his declaration at the Council of Jerusalem, that the true purity is that which comes by faith (Acts xv. 9); or his teaching in 1 Pet. iii. 21, that the true idea of baptism (the "washing" of him who has bathed in the laver of regeneration, Tit. iii. 5) is more than the putting away of the filth of the flesh, and involves the answer (better, perhaps, the *question and answer*) of a good conscience towards God. The question put by Peter when he heard the words which struck terror into the hearts of the disciples, "Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me," and beckoning to the disciple whom Jesus loved, whispered to him that he should ask of whom He spake, is from our present point of view chiefly interesting as a token of the confidential intimacy between the two friends. What followed brought out at once the characteristic impulsiveness and weakness of the chief of the Apostles. He heard words hardly less appalling than those which had struck him with dismay, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night," and he rejected with indignant haste the thought that those words could ever be true of him, "Though all men should be offended in thee, yet will I never be offended." Startled by the mysterious words, "Whither I go ye cannot come;" he asked the question, "Lord, whither goest thou?" And the answer is as mysterious as before, "Whither I go ye cannot follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards." It seems to him that this implies a renewed doubt as to his steadfastness, and he asks yet again "Why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." He was met (it is not easy to determine the exact sequence of the words recorded by the several Evangelists) by a whispered warning which told him that an hour of trial was near at hand, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you" (the whole company of the disciples) "as wheat:" followed by the tender loving assurance, "but I have prayed for *thee*, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." It did but lead to reiterated protestations, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, to prison and to death." And then, as if to fix the sense of his

infirmity indelibly on his mind by predicting the very form it would take, he heard his own words repeated as with a sad irony, "Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow before thou shalt thrice deny me." The confident assurance, however, was not yet gone, and the warning voice did but call out a fresh burst of loud-spoken zeal, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." Looking to the fact that he must, in all probability, as he afterwards used his weapon, have been one of the disciples who displayed the two swords they had brought with them in answer to the Lord's prophetic intimation that a time was coming when, from their earthly stand-point, the sword would at once be needed and be useless, it seems likely that he was eager to shew his prowess in defending his Master against the anticipated attack. (Matt. xxvi. 31—35; Mark xiv. 2—31; Luke xxii. 31—38; John xiii. 36—38.)

Here again we trace the effect of that crisis of his life in the teaching of his epistle. He had been taught by that terrible experience that the "adversary, the devil, goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," that it was necessary therefore to "be sober and to watch, so as to resist him, steadfast in the faith" (1 Pet. v. 8, 9).

The night went on. The disciples listened, we may believe, with but little understanding, to the manifold promise of the other Comforter or Advocate, who was to take their Lord's place when He should have departed from them, to the great prayer of intercession which, as the true High Priest, He offered for His people (John xiv.—xvii.). They crossed the brook Kidron, they followed Him to the Mount of Olives; they entered the garden of Gethsemane, weary, exhausted, stunned with the agitation and sorrow of the night. Once again the three, Peter, James and John were chosen from the rest as for a special nearness of companionship. Eight remained with their Lord's warning words, "Pray ye that ye enter not into temptation," falling on their ears, but heard as in a weary dream. They, the three, were taken with Him a few steps further, and saw and heard something, even in their drowsy exhaustion, of the mysterious hour of agony,

the prostrate form, the cry "Abba, Father," the prayer "Let this cup pass away from me." The very intensity of their sorrow added to their weariness and they fell asleep. It is not without significance that when the Christ came to them, and spoke in tones half of sorrow and half of wonder, He addressed Himself primarily to Peter, "Simon, sleepest thou? Could'st thou not watch with me one hour?" Yet with the reproach were mingled words of gentlest sympathy. The Master recognised at once the strength and weakness of the disciple's character, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Eager, zealous, noble impulses were there, but they were lacking in stability. The lower nature could not sustain them. It gave way under the pressure, and brought them down with it in its fall. Sleep came on again, even after these stirring words, and it was broken only by the tread of the crowd and the glare of torches and lamps and the clashing of weapons. A strange impetuous impulse came upon the ardent disciple as he shook off his slumbers, perhaps, not unconnected with the words which he had just heard The time had come when he could shew that though the spirit was eager, the flesh was not weak. Might he not now draw one of those two swords of which his Lord had said that they were "enough"? He did draw it. The one drop of blood shed in a conflict with earthly weapons on behalf of Christ was shed by Peter, and for this he gained not the praise and glowing thanks on which he had counted, but words of rebuke and caution, "Put up thy sword into its place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." He was taught the lesson, which his self-styled successors have but too often forgotten, that it was not by such weapons that the cause of Christ and His kingdom was to be defended. (Matt xxvi. 36—46; Mark xiv. 32—42; Luke xxii. 40—46.)

We need not follow in detail all the incidents of that terrible night and the early dawn that followed. Not one of all the Eleven had the courage to go with their Lord to prison and to death. Two of them, however, were drawn partly, we may believe, by the love which, in spite of their lack of courage, was not extinct, partly by an eager anxious curiosity "to see

the end," to follow the procession as it wound its way down the slopes of the Mount of Olives, across the Kidron, within the city gates, into the court of the High Priest's palace. And these two were they whom we have seen as all along associated by ties of closest friendship, Simon the son of Jona, and John the son of Zebedee. The latter had, in this instance, advantages which the former lacked. Possibly a slightly higher social *status* and culture, possibly some distant relationship, possibly again some casual contact in previous visits to Jerusalem had made him personally acquainted with Caiaphas or Annas. He entered the courtyard himself; he gained the right of entry for his friend, and the Galilean fisherman, after a hasty denial, as he entered, that he had been a disciple of Jesus, found himself in the crowd of soldiers and of servants, male and female, who were gathering round the charcoal fire. Questions were naturally asked as to who the stranger was. His provincial intonation betrayed that he was a Galilean. The light of the fire shewed to the soldiers the same features that they had seen by moonlight in the momentary scuffle, in which the High Priest's servant had lost his ear. The disciple, wearied and stunned with sorrow, could not bear the torrent of interrogation that fell upon him. The hasty words of denial escaped his lips, and he shifted his position, leaving the blazing fire for the comparative darkness of the porch. But there also he was pursued. Once and again, now with the aggravation of an oath rashly uttered, he asserted that he was not a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth, that he was altogether a stranger to him. On three several occasions, therefore, but with manifold variations and reiterations of denial in each, he had fulfilled his Lord's warning prediction. And then the cock crew, and that prediction smote upon his memory. Had it been left to do its work alone, it might well have driven him to a despair like that of Judas. As it was, the moment coincided with that in which Jesus was led from the room in which Annas had held his preliminary enquiry to the court in which the Sanhedrin was sitting, and "the Lord turned and looked on Peter" with a glance, we may well believe, of ineffable sadness and compassion. The heart of the disciple

was stirred to its inmost depths, and he threw himself on the ground (I follow the most natural interpretation of Mark xiv. 72) and burst into a flood of bitter and repentant tears. (Matt. xxvi. 69—75; Mark xiv. 66—72; Luke xxii. 54—62; John xviii. 15—27.)

We cannot read his Epistles without seeing that what the Apostle then witnessed left on him an ineffaceable impression. He had been an "eye-witness" of the sufferings of the Christ (1 Pet. v. 1). He knew of those "buffetings" in the High Priest's palace which the sinless One had borne with such silent patience (1 Pet. ii. 19—23). He had found healing for his own soul in those livid marks which the scourge had then inflicted. He had felt that he too was a sheep that had gone astray, and that he had been brought back to the fold by Him who was the true Shepherd and Protector of his soul (1 Pet. ii. 24, 25). He had been taught by the terrible experience of his own weakness in "denying the Lord who had bought him" (2 Pet. ii. 1), the intensity of that sin when it was not the momentary failure of faith and courage, but the persistent apostasy of a life. He had learnt too that a "haughty spirit goeth before a fall," that "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pet. v. 5).

The records of the Evangelists leave the hours that followed, as far as Peter is concerned, under the veil of silence. We may infer from the fact that St John stood by the cross, and that he did not, that he had not the heart to look on the sufferings of the Master he had so deeply wronged, and that the day which followed was spent by him in the silent agony of contrition, in the birth-throes of a new life rising out of death. It is significant, however, that when he next appears, it is in company with the beloved disciple. It is no strained inference from that fact that he had sought him out as one to whom he could pour the grief and penitence of his soul without fear of being reproached or repelled. As if they had kept a vigil of sorrow and prayer together on the night that followed the Sabbath, they left their lodging in Jerusalem early on the next day's dawn, and went outside the gates of the city to the garden

or orchard where, as St John knew, the body of their Lord had been entombed in the rock-hewn sepulchre (John xx. 3). It is clear that they went in the expectation of finding the body there, with the purpose, perhaps, of taking part in the funereal honours which they must have known that the two Maries and Salome (the mother of the beloved disciple), were about to pay to it, in completion of the hasty embalmment which had followed on the Crucifixion (Luke xxiv. 1). Their eagerness was shewn by the swiftness with which they ran. John was the first to reach the sepulchre and to see that it was empty, and that the winding-sheet and bandages were lying apart in the recess. Peter followed and looked in. The body was not there, and then a new faith and hope sprang up in their hearts. Words to which they had given little heed at the time came back to their memory (Matt. xvii. 9, xx. 19; Mark ix. 9, x. 34; Luke xviii. 33), and they now believed in their fulfilment. That faith was confirmed by sight in a manifestation which is not fully recorded in the Gospels but was received in the general traditions of the Church. The risen Lord "had appeared to Simon," "was seen by Cephas" (Luke xxiv. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 5). The absence of any further record suggests the inference that it was but as the vision of a moment, with few words or none, but, we may believe, with a look as full of pardoning pity as that which had fallen on him as he sat in the gate-way of the High Priest's palace. It follows from this that we must separate the two Apostles from the rest of the disciples, who could not bring themselves to receive the report of the Resurrection brought back by the two Maries and Salome. On the evening of that day, Peter shared with the others in the joy of hearing the familiar words of blessing "Peace be unto you," in the breath that must have thrilled through every nerve of their spiritual life, in the words which gave them the new mysterious power, not only as before, "to bind and to loose," to distinguish, *i.e.* what was or was not binding in the precepts of the Law, but to deal with those who had transgressed the great commandments by "forgiving" or "retaining" sins according as the prophetic insight which they

would receive by the gift of the Spirit, enabled them to discern penitence from impenitence in the heart of the offender (John xx. 22, 23). Of the deliberate exercise of that power by Peter we have examples in the cases of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts v. 1—10), of Simon the Sorcerer (Acts viii. 20, 21), in his condemnation of the false teachers of 2 Pet. ii. 12. Less direct traces of it are found in his proclamation of the forgiveness of sins as following on repentance and faith and baptism, in Acts ii. 38, iii. 19, in the stress which he lays on the truth that Love is the great absolver, covering the multitude of sins (1 Pet. iv. 8).

The week that followed was spent, we may believe, as other devout Jews spent it, in the solemnities of the seven days of the great Paschal feast, probably in the services of the Temple, in recalling their Lord's words, in prayer and meditation, in searching the Scriptures with the new light thrown on them by the fact that their Lord had risen from the dead. The disciples, however, felt that they were now marked men in the midst of an unfriendly crowd. At the end of the week, as at the beginning, they were still meeting, most probably in the upper chamber belonging to one who was in secret a disciple, which had received them when they ate their last Passover, and were taught from henceforth to break bread and to drink wine as a memorial of their Lord. And "the doors were shut for fear of the Jews" (John xx. 19, 26). We can scarcely doubt that they were obeying that command, when for one brief moment they saw the beloved Form once more, and heard the words which rebuked the incredulity of Thomas, "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet believed." Of those we have an echo not to be mistaken in the words of 1 Pet. i. 8, "Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, *though now ye see him not, yet believing*, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

The Feast was over, and the disciples, having no call to any immediate work at Jerusalem, returned with the other pilgrims to Galilee. Their Lord had indeed bidden them so to return, and had, in a message sent specially, held out the hope to Peter that He would meet them there (Mark xvi. 7; Matt. xxviii. 7). There seemed no reason why they should not

fill up the interval of expectation by honest labour, and they returned to the work of their earlier calling on the Sea of Tiberias. Peter and Thomas and Nathanael and James and John and two other unnamed disciples were together, we may believe, in Capernaum or Bethsaida. An impulse came to Peter, not unconnected, it may be, with the many memories of the scene and the act, which led him to propose, as the sun was setting, that they should go out together in the boat and fish. Was he expecting once again to see that form of the Son of Man walking on the waters? Did he hope to shew that his faith and love were stronger than they had been of old? The night passed, the dawn was breaking. The morning mists were hanging over the shore. They saw the dim outline of a man's figure on the beach. They heard a voice, as of a passing traveller, hailing them in the familiar phrase which was used in speaking to those of their class, "Ho, lads, have you any food with you?" A command, given in reply to their negative answer, that they should cast the net to the right of the boat, did not suggest any other thought than that they were listening to the counsel of one more conversant than themselves with that region of the lake, who knew better where the fishes used to swarm in shoals. But when the nets were filled, so that they found it hard to draw them up, the disciple whom Jesus loved, recalling how once before they had taken such a draught of fishes after a night of fruitless toil, whispered to his friends that the stranger was none other than the Lord. The more impetuous Peter, as soon as he heard the words, girding his fisher's tunic round his loins, flung himself into the water, swam the two hundred cubits that lay between him and the shore, and reached his Master's feet. He and the other disciples drew the net to shore, counted the fish they had taken, and at His command prepared their simple meal with the wood fire which He had kindled on the beach. Few words passed between them, but once again, as before, when the Five Thousand and the Four had been fed by Him, it was He who gave them the bread and the fish which formed their repast. The meal was over, and then he heard the question, addressed to him as like words had been addressed

before (John i. 42; Matt. xvi. 17), by his earlier and earthly name, "Simon, son of Joannes (I give the reading of the best MSS.), lovest thou me more than these love me?" The question sounded to him almost like a reproach. It recalled the hour when he had boasted that he did love Him more, that though all others might deny Him, he would not deny, but was ready to go with Him to prison and to death. He made answer as in the fulness of the heart, changing the word which had been used, "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I *love* thee," as friend loves friend, as the scholar should love the Master[1], and he was told how he was to shew that affection by the words "Feed my lambs." The question was put again, and answered as before, followed by the command pointing to a higher and a wider work, "Be the shepherd of my sheep." Yet a third time came the question, Peter's own word being now taken up by his Lord, as though his previous declaration had still left some lingering doubt, and, pained by the distrust which the words seemed to imply, there was something of impatient protest in his third answer, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." And still there came the same command, varied in its form, "Feed my sheep:" lambs and sheep alike (*προβάτια* in its diminutive force seems chosen to include both) were to be committed to his care. And then, as if to comfort him for the pain of the previous moment, he heard the prophetic words which shewed him that the Master, who "knew all things," had, in very deed, read the secrets of his soul, and now saw there the love which would endure through many long years of labour, and would make him faithful unto death, "Verily, verily, I say to thee, when thou wast younger thou wast wont to gird thyself, and didst walk whither thou wouldest, but when thou shalt be old, another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldes not.' The beloved disciple, who survived his friend many years, lived to record how these words had been fulfilled by the death by which Peter had glorified God. But

[1] I have endeavoured to express by a paraphrase the undoubted distinction between *ἀγαπῶ* and *φιλῶ*, between *βόσκω* and *ποιμαίνω*.

for Peter himself, the first thought on hearing of his own future, was the strong desire to know his friend's also. Should they, whose friendship hitherto had been "lovely and pleasant" in its purity, be divided or united in their death? "Lord, and what shall this man do?" His desire was not to be gratified. He was to use the present and to leave the future in the Father's hands, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (John xxi.)

Here, again, the feelings to which the words gave rise have left manifold traces in the Apostle's writings. As age was creeping on him, he remembered that the Lord Jesus Christ had shewed him that the putting off of the tabernacle of his flesh would not be by the slow decline of old age, but be quick and sudden in its character (see note on 2 Pet. i. 14). His charge to his fellow-workers in the ministry of the Gospel is that they too should be "shepherds of the flock," eager and ready as he himself had been in the service of Him who was the chief shepherd and guardian of their souls (1 Pet. v. 2, ii. 25).

The incident thus recalled is the last in which the name of Peter meets us in the Gospel records. We can only recall to mind that he was probably among the five hundred brethren who, drawn together, we may believe, by his witness to the Resurrection, from Capernaum and Bethsaida and Cana and Chorazin (the nucleus of the Galilean Churches which appear in Acts ix. 31), were permitted, as the Eleven had been, to see for a few moments the visible presence of their risen Lord; that he was a sharer in the mission which sent them to teach, not Israel only, but all the nations of the heathen world, and to baptize them in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that to him also was given the promise of signs that should attest his mission, casting out devils, speaking with new tongues, taking up serpents (Matt. xxviii. 16—20; Mark xvi. 17, 18). Four weeks passed away, and then they went up to Jerusalem, and met together as before. Once more they saw Him, and now the meeting was a longer one. Resuming His old character and work as a Teacher, a Rabbi instructing His scholars in the house of the Interpreter, He led them through Law and Prophecy

and Psalm, and taught them to understand the meanings which had before been hidden, when they witnessed of Himself (Luke xxiv. 44, 45). They learnt from Him what was to be the outline of their future teaching, how they were to preach "repentance and remission of sins to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," how He would send to them the promise of His Father, how they were to remain in the city, filled though it was with their foes, until that promise was fulfilled, and they should be endued, before not many days had passed, "with power from on high."

And then they took the self-same path, probably about the self-same hour, as that which they had trodden on the unforgotten night of sorrow, down to the valley of the Kidron, and up the slopes of Olivet, and past Gethsemane, till they came to Bethany. They had one more question to ask. He had one last word to speak. They wished, as before, to know whether the kingdom of God should immediately appear (Luke xix. 11), whether at that time He would restore again the Kingdom to Israel. They heard words, the last they were ever to hear from those divine lips, that it was not given to them to know the times and the seasons which the Father had fixed by His own supreme authority. In due course that restitution, not of Israel only but of the universe[1], should come. Their task in the meantime was clear, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high, and ye shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." And then all was over. "He was parted from them, and was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight." Two forms like those which the Maries had seen in the sepulchre stood by them, and bade them stand no longer gazing up into Heaven. As surely as they had seen Him go into Heaven, so surely should they see Him come again. Sorrowfully and silently, yet full of an exceeding joy, the Eleven retraced their steps to the upper chamber in Jerusalem. For Peter, as for the others, it was true that the training

[1] The thoughtful student of the Acts cannot fail to recognise the connexion of thought between the ἀποκαθιστάνεις of i. 6, and the ἀποκατάστασις πάντων of iii. 21.

of the disciple was over, that the work of the Apostle was to begin (Acts i. 1—12).

CHAPTER II.

LIFE OF ST PETER. THE WORK OF THE APOSTLE.

No thoughtful reader can pass from the study of the Gospels to that of the Acts, without being struck with the different type of character presented to us in connexion with the name of Simon Peter. The impulsive, wayward, unsteadfast disciple, uttering only a few hasty questions and passionate ejaculations, has become the ruler of a community, able to address the multitude and the Sanhedrin in well-ordered and elaborate harangues. The change is all the more noticeable from the fact that we cannot account for it by the hypothesis of a mere difference of authorship. For the writer of the Acts was also the writer of a Gospel, and the difference is not less striking when we compare the one history with the other, than it is when we take St Matthew's or St Mark's Gospel as a standard of comparison with the Acts. Something, doubtless, is due to the writer's aim and the standpoint from which he wrote; something also to the difference between the writer's informants in the two cases. It was in part, at least, his purpose to present St Peter to his Italian friend Theophilus as the head of a large and influential section of the Church, representing that section not in the spirit of party, but in that of a wise and dignified moderation, aiming at unity and peace. In collecting materials for his two histories he would be dependent for the first on reports which came, directly or indirectly, from Galilean disciples, who had known Simon Bar-jona in the days of our Lord's ministry, whose memory was stored with what we should call the anecdotes of that period of his life. In gathering information for the second, his facts would come mainly from the members of the Church at Jerusalem to whom Peter had been a familiar name as one held in honour and esteem, almost indeed in awe (Acts v. 13—15). The impression thus formed

would tend, in the nature of things, to give a shade of colour to the writer's representations. What he heard now from one hearer and now from another of the Apostle's speeches would have to be set in order and reproduced with something of the writer's own skill and in his own phraseology.

There is, however, a deeper ground of difference, and this is found in the real change that had passed over St Peter's character. That night of cowardice and denial, that terrible experience of his own weakness, that look which drew forth the bitter tears of repentance, was, as his Lord's words had indicated (Luke xxii. 32), as truly the hour of his conversion as the vision on the road to Damascus was the conversion of St Paul. The new man was then born in him to a conscious life. It was strengthened, almost as soon as it was born, by the special powers of the Pentecostal gift. Assuming, even on merely human grounds, that St Luke aimed at reproducing faithfully what he had heard of the two periods of St Peter's life, the difference between them cannot be regarded otherwise than as at once a proof and a measure of the transforming power of the grace of God. Simon Bar-jona is become more fully than he had ever been till now, the Cephas, the Peter, of his Lord's prophetic designation. It is significant that, except in the history of Cornelius (Acts x. 5, 32) and in the speech of James the Lord's brother (Acts xv. 14) the name Simon drops entirely into the back-ground, and he is known as Peter only.

It was, we may believe, due in part to the influence of the beloved disciple, in part to that of the words spoken by the Christ in John xx. 21—23. xxi. 15—23, that the authority of the Apostle suffered no diminution in consequence of his grievous fall, that no one ever reproached him with having denied his Lord. That that denial found a place in every Gospel record, may be accepted as a proof that he in his turn had no wish to hush it up or veil it in obscurity. It was for him, we may well believe, what a different yet analogous experience was to St Paul, a standing proof of the mercy of God and the power of His grace, that he had risen after so great a fall.

There is a significant calmness in the first act that followed

on the Ascension. The disciples, male and female, who formed the nucleus of the future Church, one hundred and twenty in number, were met together. They were addressed for the first time as a community by one to whom they looked as their natural leader. The place left vacant by the death of Judas had to be filled up in order that the Apostles might once again meet Israel as the representatives of the twelve-tribed people. The treachery of the Apostle had to be placed in such a light, that men might see that while it was from one point of view the frustration of a Divine calling, it was, from another, the working out of a Divine purpose. He shewed that he had not studied in vain in his Master's school of prophetic interpretation. The Scriptures that spoke of the righteous sufferer as the victim of a base treachery (Ps. lxix. 25, cix. 8) required to be fulfilled in the case of the ideal sufferer. The disciple who was to be chosen to fill the vacant place must be qualified to be, as the Eleven were, a witness of the Resurrection. In the prayer that precedes the final choice referred to Christ as "knowing the hearts of all men" (Acts i. 24) we have a point of contact, with almost the last words of the disciple recorded in the Gospels "Lord, thou knowest all things" (John xxi. 17), with the subsequent speech of the Apostle when he appealed, at the council in Jerusalem, to "God which knoweth the hearts of all men" (Acts xv. 8).

The company were gathered together as before, presumably the hundred and twenty, (but possibly, as some have thought, the Twelve only), who had been mentioned in Acts i. 15. They were in an attitude of intense spiritual expectation, waiting till they should be "endued with power from on high." Day by day the streets of the city were more thickly thronged with pilgrims from all parts of the world to keep the coming Feast of Pentecost, the Feast of Weeks, of Ingathering, of Lev. xxiii. 15; Deut. xvi. 9. It was a day connected in Jewish tradition with one great revelation, with the utterance of the great Ten Words, or Laws, on Sinai. The night before the Pentecost was specially appropriated in Jewish usage, for a solemn thanksgiving for that revelation of the Divine Will (Schöttgen,

Hor. Hebr. on Acts ii. 1). At such a moment prayer would naturally be more earnest and intense than ever. Their Lord's words "How much more shall your heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (Luke xi. 13) would be ringing, as it were, in the ears of Peter and his brother Apostles.

And so the promise was fulfilled. They looked and saw, as it were, a shower of tongues of fire hovering over them, so distributed (this and not "cloven" is the meaning of the Greek word) that none was left without his portion of the lambent flame. They heard the sound, not now of the whispered, hushed breath, which had before been the outward symbol of the Spirit's silent working (John xx. 22), but the sound of a rushing mighty wind sweeping round and over them. And this outward wonder was but the token of a sudden startling change in their spiritual consciousness. They burst into an ecstasy of adoration such as they had never known before. Blessings, praises, doxologies, such as they may have listened to before as they stood in the courts of the Temple, and heard the devotions of the pilgrims from many lands, but had never till then attempted to join in, now burst from their lips with a marvellous fluency. They were conscious of new sympathies with those worshippers from afar. They called on them to join in their hymns of praise as they told of the great deeds that God had wrought for them. The "utterance" would seem to have been different in character from that of ordinary speech, and was not used as an instrument of teaching. The analogies to which St Paul refers in 1 Cor. xiii. 1, xiv. 7, 8, suggest the thought that the words of ecstatic adoration were uttered in the tones of praise, and that what the multitude heard was of the nature of a jubilant chant[1]. Some, as they listened, asked seriously what was the meaning of this unlooked-for rapture. Some, looking at the outward manifestations of a mood so different from the cold level of ordinary worshippers, rushed to the cynical conclusion that the

[1] It would be out of place here to enter at any length into a discussion as to the nature of the Gift of Tongues, and I content myself with referring to the Article on that subject in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

men who thus spoke were "full of new wine," and knew not what they did[1]. (Acts ii. 1—13.)

When the sign and wonder had done its work of drawing together a crowd of eager listeners, answering in this respect to the account which St Paul gives of the end for which the gift of Tongues had been bestowed (1 Cor. xiv. 22, 23), St Peter rose, as the acknowledged leader of the company, and speaking, either in the Aramaic which was the common speech of Jerusalem, or, as seems more probable, in the Greek with which, as a Galilean, he was probably familiar, and which was the natural medium of communication with the Hellenistic Jews of the dispersion, appeared in his new character. The "prophetic word" was now in him, and he had been taught to understand that word as it had been uttered by the older prophets. (Comp. 2 Pet. i. 19—21.) With a courage which presented an almost miraculous contrast to his recent cowardice he pressed home upon the consciences of rulers and of people the sin of which they had been guilty in condemning and crucifying Him who was indeed their Lord. He bore his witness that that Lord had been raised from the dead, because it was not possible that He should be holden by the bands of death, or that the Holy One should see corruption and be left in Hades. He called them to repentance and baptism. He proclaimed to them the remission of sins and promised that they too should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. We may trace the lessons taught by that day's experience in the words in which he speaks, at the close of his life, of the Spirit's work. For him the "prophetic word," as a living and abiding power, was more even than the "excellent" glory which he had seen on the Mount of Transfiguration (2 Pet. i. 19). He had learnt that prophecy did not come at any time by the will of man, but that holy men of God spoke, as he himself had spoken, their human consciousness co-operating but not originating, as they were "borne on" (the very word used of the "*rushing* mighty wind") by the

[1] It may be noted as an interesting coincidence, that St Paul contrasts what we may venture to call the two forms of stimulation. "Be not drunk with wine,...but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. v. 18).

Holy Ghost (2 Pet. i. 21). The large increase in the number of the disciples that followed, the necessity for organising and guiding the life of a large community, must have called for and developed other spiritual gifts, such as those of the "helps" and "governments" of 1 Cor. xii. 28, of a more permanent character. The Galilean fisherman became, in one sense, the originator of the polity and ritual of the Church, "binding" and "loosing" according to the wisdom given to him. There was, however, no abrupt break in the outward continuity of his life. The old habit of devotion still continued, and the accustomed Services of the Temple in which his Master had delighted, and which He had twice striven to restore to their ancient purity (John ii. 14—16, Matt. xxi. 12) still saw him among the crowd of worshippers. Nor was the old friendship with the son of Zebedee to whom he had turned in the bitterness of his repentant sorrow, less intimate than before. "Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour" (Acts iii. 1). The healing of the cripple at the gate of the Temple that is called Beautiful, shewed that the power which his Lord had given him to cure diseases was not diminished. He had learnt that it was not by "silver or gold" that the wants of men, whether bodily or spiritual, were to be removed, but by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, who had healed the cripple at Bethesda (John v. 2, 14) and who was present to heal now, just as he afterwards taught that it was not "by silver and gold" that men were ransomed from the power of an evil life, but by "the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet. i. 18, 19). In speaking of that work of healing he disclaimed its being due to any power or piety of his own. It was the work of "the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob" (we note the disciple's use of the self-same name as that with which his Master had rebuked the unbelief of the Sadducean priesthood (Matt. xxii. 32)), who had thus "glorified His Son Jesus," as He had before glorified Him in the days of His ministry (John v. 20, xii. 28) by like works of healing. Once again he pressed home upon the people who had been drawn together by the report of the miracle thus wrought their guilt in denying the Holy One and the Just (comp. 1 Pet.

iii. 18, for a like use of the same epithet), and preferring to him such an one as Barabbas, and he spoke to them, in the power of his new "prophetic word" of the "times of refreshing" which were at hand for those who sought them and might be hastened by repentance, of the "restitution of all things" which lay in a distant future which he would not venture to define. St Luke's report of his words is, it will be noted, in exact agreement with his own later teaching when he urges the believers in Christ to "look for and hasten the coming of the day of God," and declares that he and they are looking for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Pet. iii. 12, 13). In both passages we find an echo of the words which had been heard only by Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, "Elias truly shall come first and shall restore all things" (Matt. xvii. 11). In this expectation he saw himself in harmony with the long line of prophets who had spoken of these things (Comp. 2 Pet. iii. 2).

The faithful witness thus borne led to its natural results. The two disciples were brought before the Sadducean priests who could not endure the testimony thus given to the Resurrection of the Christ, and now the courage of Peter did not fail him, and he was ready to go even to prison, and, it might be, to death for his Lord's sake (Luke xxii. 33). When he was brought on the following day before the Court that had tried and condemned his Lord, he was strengthened by a new consciousness that the Spirit which he had received was speaking through him. Now he understood what it was not to "take anxious thought" or to "premeditate" when brought face to face even with the rulers of his people (Matt. x. 19). And with a boldness which may well have startled them he reproduces the very words which, when they came from our Lord's lips, had roused the very frenzy of hatred. The chief priests and Pharisees heard once more that "the stone which the builders rejected had become the head of the corner" and that they were the builders on whom lay the guilt of that rejection. (Acts iv. 11. Matt. xxi. 42.) That imagery, so closely connected with his own name, was fixed on his memory to the end (1 Pet. ii. 7)

That they heard such a rebuke from these peasants of Galilee, "unlearned and ignorant men" who filled no office and had never sat at the feet of any Rabbi in Jerusalem, amazed them. Who were these speakers? They looked and recognised the features of the only two disciples who had entered the High Priest's palace on the morning of the crucifixion (John xviii. 15) and whom they may then probably have seen there. In their amazement they took what seemed to them a middle course. They could not deny the miracle; they would not punish the Apostles. It would be enough to threaten them, and command silence for the future as far as the hated name of Jesus was concerned. They find what must have seemed to them a resolute defiance. Those disciples had a duty imposed on them and from that duty they could not shrink. It was not right to hearken unto men more than unto God (Acts iv. 19, 20). They left the Judgment Hall with the full assertion of their freedom, and when they rejoined the company of the disciples, and told what had happened to them, they burst out into what St Luke records as the Church's first hymn of praise, an echo, as it were, of the Pentecostal chant, a "spiritual song" (Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16) in the sense of being the unpremeditated utterance of the Spirit that gave them the new "tongues" which were the instruments of a new power of exulting joy and praise. In the hymn itself we note some interesting coincidences. The "Lord" with which it opens, is not the ordinary *Kyrios*, but the *Despotes* which we find in 2 Pet. ii. 1. The "child Jesus" is none other than the "servant of the Lord" of the later prophecies of Isaiah (xlii. 1, lii. 13), whom the Apostle had now learnt to identify both in his sufferings and his glory with the Lord whom he served. His view of the relations between man's freedom and God's foreordaining purpose is the same as that expressed in his earlier speeches in the Acts (i. 16, ii. 23, iv. 28) and in his latest utterance in his Epistles (1 Pet. ii. 8).

The history of Ananias and Sapphira need not be further dwelt on than as indicating the power to forgive or retain sins which Peter exercised in the full consciousness of its reality, when the pardon or condemnation expressed the insight into

character which he had received through the illumination of the Spirit (John xx. 23). The punishment which he was the agent in inflicting was necessary to preserve the infant community from that greed of gain which had led Judas to his destruction. How far that punishment extended, it was not for him, nor is it for us to say. It is enough to note that the dominant idea of all such punishments as exercised by the Apostles was that the offender was "delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the Spirit might be saved in the day of the the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. v. 5), that he himself, in dwelling on the marvellous mercies of the Father of all spirits, speaks of those who "are judged according to men in the flesh" and yet "live to God in the Spirit" (1 Pet. iv. 6). The natural result of the punishment thus inflicted was seen in a new awe and reverence of which the Apostle was the object. The Eastern portico of the Temple, known as Solomon's, as containing, it was believed, part of the original structure of the first Temple, in which he had of old walked with his Master as He taught (John x. 23), was now, for a time, almost, as it were, appropriated to him and his brother Apostles, by a common consent, which the priests and Levites did not dare to resist, as a place where they might meet and teach the people (Acts v. 12). The very "shadow of Peter" became, as the hem of Christ's garment had been, a means of healing to those who brought with them the intensity of faith which, in its turn, brought them within the range of the divine power to heal.

This expansion of influence brought on the next stage of persecution. Threats, it seemed, were not enough, and more stringent measures had to be taken. Once again the Apostles (now, it would seem, the whole company of the Twelve) were called before the tribunal of the Sadducean priesthood, and were committed to the dungeon of the public prison. Released by an angel of the Lord, they appeared in the Temple carrying on the work of teaching. Summoned once more before the Council, Peter, as the spokesman of the rest, proclaimed his steadfast adherence to the rule that it was right to obey God rather than man, and so to bear their witness that Jesus had risen

from the dead. The prudent advice of Gamaliel, as representing the more moderate section of the Pharisees, prevailed for the time, but though acquitted of the charge of blasphemy, they were dealt with as disturbers of the Temple, and suffered the Jewish penalty of being beaten with rods (Acts v. 17—42).

Peter's wisdom and moderation were as conspicuous in the next stage of the Church's growth as his courage and prophetic power had been hitherto. The distribution of alms to the distressed widows of the community was the occasion of serious difficulties. He and the rest of the Twelve were Galileans, but the Hellenistic or Greek-speaking Jews had now become an important section, and they thought themselves passed over in favour of the Hebrews, with whom the Galilean Apostles were supposed to have greater sympathy. The difficulty was met by no assertion of supremacy, but by a wise and generous concession. The multitude of the disciples were to elect seven officers for this special purpose; the Apostles would confine themselves to the higher work of teaching and of prayer. The Greek names of the seven who were elected make it probable that they were chosen as representing the several sections of the Hellenistic Jews of the dispersion (Acts vi. 1—7).

With the character and work of Stephen, and with the persecution of which he was the object we are not now concerned, except so far as the latter indicates that his teaching presented features that roused a hostility which had not been caused by the preaching of St Peter, and that the hostility came from a different quarter. The persecutors of the Apostle had been the Sadducees, who hated him for the witness which he bore to the resurrection of Jesus. He had been protected by the temporizing policy of the more moderate section of the Pharisees represented by Gamaliel. In the case of Stephen we have a coalition between the more violent section of those Pharisees headed by Gamaliel's pupil and the Sadducean priesthood. And the charges against him, interpreted by the tenor of his own *apologia*, shew why this was so. He had dwelt more than the Twelve had done, on the wider thoughts which in the teaching of our Lord had been presented as in their germinal

state and had been developed by the teaching of the Spirit. That the Temple was to pass away, that its sacrifices had ceased to have any value for the deliverance of man's soul from the power or penalty of evil, that the customs which Moses had delivered, the whole body of outward ceremonial ordinances, were about to pass away before the coming of a better order, this Stephen saw more clearly and proclaimed more earnestly than Peter had as yet done (Acts vi. 13, 14). And therefore it was that while the storm of persecution fell on him and the whole body of believers, specially, it is obvious, on his six colleagues and those who followed his teaching, the Twelve were able to remain at Jerusalem and carried on their work without further molestation. They were not again exposed to the fiery trial of persecution till they had taken one or two decisive steps in the path in which Stephen had led the way.

The first of those steps was brought about by a fellow-worker of Stephen's, like in character and feeling. Though the Twelve had been told that they were to be witnesses for their Lord in Samaria as well as in Jerusalem and Judæa (Acts i. 8), they had as yet acted as if the rule given on their first mission were still binding, and had not entered into "any city of the Samaritans" (Matt. x. 5). Philip, forced to leave Jerusalem by the hostility of both the ruling parties, found a refuge in the unnamed city of Samaria, probably, i.e. in Sychar. The way had been prepared for him, and for his teaching, partly by the announcement of the Christ to the woman of Samaria, and through her, to her people, that the Mountain of Gerizim and the Temple at Jerusalem were alike among the things that were decaying and waxing old, and were ready to vanish away (John iv. 21—24), partly by the counterfeit of Divine Truth preached by the teacher who, as Simon the Sorcerer, became in the next century the hero of the romance of heresy. The Apostles in Jerusalem welcomed the tidings that the Samaritans had received the Gospel, and the two friends Peter and John were sent to confirm their faith by imparting to them, through the laying on of hands, the gift of the Holy Spirit. They had

not been in that region since one of them had desired to call down fire from heaven on those who would not receive his Master (Luke ix. 54). Now he had learnt what manner of Spirit claimed him as its own, and came to give them that Spirit whose mighty presence was as a baptism of fire. Then for the first time, though, if we follow the traditions of the second century, by no means for the last, the two Simons stood face to face in all the contrast of their characters, the one true, faithful, impetuous; the other greedy of gain and trading on the credulity of his followers (Acts viii. 9—24). In him, accompanied as he was, by his mistress Helena, it is not difficult to believe, he saw the typical representative of the false teachers whom he paints in such dark colours in his second Epistle as "having eyes full *of an adulteress* and that cannot cease from sin, beguiling unstable souls, having a heart exercised with covetous practices" (see Notes on 2 Pet. ii. 12—14). In the boast of Simon that he was "the great power of God" (Acts viii. 9, 10) we recognise the "great swelling words of vanity" of 2 Pet. ii. 18; in the sentence passed on the sorcerer, "Thy money go with thee to destruction" (Acts viii. 20), we have the foreshadowing of the final doom of those "who shall utterly perish in their own corruption" (2 Pet. ii. 12). The very word which describes the state of those who had forsaken the *right* way (2 Pet. ii. 15) is that which he had used of Simon, "Thy heart is not *right* in the sight of God" (Acts viii. 21). It had been better for him, as for them, "not to have known the way of righteousness," and his latter end, like theirs, was worse than the beginning (2 Pet. ii. 20).

The two Apostles continued their mission work in Samaria and returned to Jerusalem. When they reached it they found that the storm of persecution had ceased. It may be that they heard that a strange change had come over him, the zealot of Tarsus, who had been so prominent as its leader. Soon the minds of their countrymen were agitated by a danger from another quarter. The Emperor Caius (more commonly known by his nickname of Caligula) was bent on anticipating, while yet alive, the *apotheosis* which had been decreed by the ob-

equious Senate to his predecessors on their death, and had given orders that his statue, in colossal proportions, should be set up in the Temple at Jerusalem. He was deterred from the insane project by the remonstrances of his friend Agrippa (grandson of Herod the Great and brother of the Herodias of the Gospel history), whom he had made King of Judæa, and of Petronius, the Governor of Syria, but while the alarm lasted, it absorbed the attention of the people, and so far was favourable to the silent growth of the Churches of Judæa and Galilee and Samaria "in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Ghost" (Acts ix. 31, Joseph. *Ant.* XVIII. 8).

In the meantime, some three years after the death of Stephen, the Apostle met for the first time the teacher whose name was in after ages and in many ways to be closely associated with his own. Saul of Tarsus came from Damascus to Jerusalem with the express purpose of conferring with Peter (Gal. i. 18), and communicating to him the new phase of truth which had been revealed to him, as Peter's had been of old, not by flesh and blood, but by his Father in Heaven (Gal. i. 11, 12), as to the unity of mankind in Christ, and the breaking down of the wall of partition that divided Jew from Gentile. The visit was, however, but a short and hurried one. Peter and James the brother of the Lord were the only two representatives of the Church of Jerusalem whom the new preacher saw (Gal. i. 19). They shrank at first from receiving him as remembering his old hostility, and when they yielded to the witness which Barnabas, probably as having been his friend in past years, bore to his sincerity, it was as yet, it may be, without the full unreserved confidence which is the condition of a free interchange of thoughts (Acts ix. 21). Enough, however, had been done, to sow the seeds of new thoughts, to wake questions which were in due course to receive a solution, to quicken the expectations of the Apostle as to the time and manner when the Gentiles should be admitted to the Kingdom.

The mission work of Peter led him from Jerusalem towards the West. At Lydda, and in the region known as the Saron (=the woodland, or, as we might say, the Weald), Churches

were founded or were strengthened. At Joppa, even prior to his arrival, there was a Christian Church, with its organised charity, its widows and its sisterhood of workers. Dorcas, or Tabitha (the double form of the name indicates the union of Hellenistic and Hebrew believers there) had probably points of contact with the Jews of the Western dispersion[1]. The town, as the chief centre of trade for the south of Palestine, must have been as full of motley groups of sailors and traders as Tyre or Sidon. As he looked out from the harbour on the waters of the Great Sea, the question must have been in his mind, when and how the Isles of the Gentiles, the Isles of Chittim, should acknowledge Christ as their Lord. In taking up his abode with "one Simon a tanner," whom we can scarcely think of as other than a fellow-disciple, there was at least one step towards breaking down the traditions of the elders, for from the stand-point of those traditions, the trade was one which brought with it an immediate and inevitable uncleanness (Acts ix. 32—43).

Solitude, prayer, fasting, the natural resource of a spirit under the pressure of such thoughts became for him the channel of a new revelation. The hunger of the body became a parable of the hunger of the soul. The "all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts and creeping things" were symbols of the Gentile nations, whom he had hitherto looked on as common and unclean. He might afterwards learn to see that in their coming down from Heaven and being taken up to it again, there was shadowed forth the truth that Humanity had been redeemed in the mysteries of the Incarnation and the Ascension. The command, "Arise, Peter, kill and eat," was soon interpreted by events (Acts x. 1—18). He was not to let any previous scruples as to what was common or unclean hinder him from seeing in the Gentiles those who might satisfy, even as they were, his yearning for the extension of his Master's kingdom. He was taught where to find the other sheep which were not

[1] It is not without interest to note that the name Dorcas appears in the *Columbarium* of Livia at Rome as belonging to an *Ornatrix* (=lady's maid, or, perhaps, needle-woman) of the Empress's household.

of the fold of Israel, whom also it was his to feed (John x. 16, xxi. 15—17). Incidentally we may note as characteristic of the man, the impetuous "Not so, Lord," reminding us of his "Thou shalt never wash my feet" (John xiii. 8), the threefold repetition of the whole vision reminding us at once of the threefold denial, and the threefold question and command of John xxi. 15—17. He was not slow to understand and act on the meaning of the symbolic vision as it was interpreted by the sequence of events. He too had learnt to "honour all men" (1 Pet. ii. 17) and to see that in the Kingdom of God a "respect of persons" based on distinctions of race was as contrary to the mind of Christ as that based on distinctions of wealth or rank (James ii. 1—4), and so had to supply, as it were, another minor premiss to St James's general principle. He had been taught that "in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him" (Acts x. 34, 35). He had been led almost to the very platform of St Paul, that "circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing," but that "faith working by love" is all in all (Gal. v. 6). When the gift of the Spirit, the new exulting and enthusiastic joy fell upon the friends of Cornelius, anticipating in this case the outward baptism which usually preceded it, he was ready with the question to which there could be but one answer, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" (Acts x. 44—48.) Traces of the teaching of those eventful days meet us at every stage in his Epistles. "The Gospel," he tells his readers, "had been preached to them with the witness of the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven" (1 Pet. i. 12). He reminds them that "the Father without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work" (1 Pet. i. 17), that purification of the soul comes by "obeying the truth through the Spirit" (1 Pet. i. 22). During the remainder of that visit to Cæsarea, he lived as freely as St Paul afterwards did, in the house of an uncircumcised Gentile.

On his return to Jerusalem he was confronted by the hostility of those who were now recognised as the party of the

Circumcision, insisting on its indispensable necessity. The mere statement of the fact that he had gone in to men uncircumcised and had eaten with them seemed to them at first enough. Their deference for his personal authority and for the vision that had come to him from God, made them withdraw their objection for the time, and the great bulk of the party, represented, we may believe, by James the brother of the Lord, glorified God for thus giving to the Gentiles repentance unto life (Acts xi. 1—18). Afterwards, it would seem, the ultra-zealots of the section came to persuade themselves that the case of Cornelius was altogether exceptional and was an exception that proved the rule.

It seems probable, though not absolutely certain, that Peter shared in the joy of the Church of Jerusalem when tidings came that Gentiles had been admitted to baptism at Antioch as they had been at Cæsarea, and in the action which gave Barnabas a special mission to guide and organise the community that had thus been formed (Acts xi. 22). If he remained at Jerusalem after Agabus had predicted the famine which in the early years of Claudius (A.D. 41—3) pressed on the Church there, he must have rejoiced in the proof given of the love and pity of the Gentiles in the contribution sent for their relief from the Christians of Antioch by the hand of Barnabas and Saul (Acts xi. 27—30). The stress laid on the fact that this was sent to the "elders," and the absence of any reference to this visit in St Paul's review of his conferences with St Peter (Gal. i. 18) are, however, all but decisive in favour of the inference that he was at the time engaged in some unrecorded mission work away from Jerusalem.

The arrival of the new king Agrippa, and the rigorous measures which he took, in order to court the favour of priests and people, against the Church at Jerusalem, drew the Apostle back to the post of danger. James the son of Zebedee, the companion of his early years, was put to death, the protomartyr of the Apostolic company. He himself was thrown into prison as sentenced to a like doom when the Passover, then impending, should be over. From that doom he was rescued, as before, by

the intervention of an angel of the Lord, and he, for whom the Church was praying in the house of Mary, the kinswoman of Barnabas, and mother of John surnamed Mark (both probably converted by his preaching, 1 Pet. v. 13), suddenly appeared in the midst of them. It was, however, necessary for his safety to leave Jerusalem, and leaving the Church in the charge of James the brother of the Lord, he went as St Luke records to "another place" (Acts xii. 1—17). Where this was we have no data for determining, probably Lydda or Joppa, or some other town in Judæa where he would be welcomed and protected. The assumption that the "other place" was Rome and that this was the beginning of his twenty-five years Episcopate, though adopted by many Roman Catholic writers, scarcely calls for a serious refutation.

From this time forth, however, the Acts of the Apostles become more and more exclusively the Acts of St Paul alone, and five or six years pass over during which we have no record of St Peter's work. James, the brother of the Lord, assumed more and more the position of the Bishop of the Church at Jerusalem. Peter, and probably John also, may have been employed in exercising their Apostolic office in the other Churches of Judæa. The revival of the question as to the conditions on which Gentile converts were to be admitted into the Church, which arose first at Antioch, and was referred for settlement to the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem, at all events drew him back to that city. The part he took in the discussion which took place in the Synod or Conference that was thus held was consistent at once with the lessons impressed on him by the history of Cornelius, and with the later teaching of his Epistles (Acts xv. 1—11). His position, however, was distinctly that of a debater, not of a judge. Though his position gives him a natural authority, there is no assumption of primacy, still less of an unerring power to judge. He reasons from past experience as the witness of a divine purpose. He dwells on the fact that true purity belonged to the heart, and not to the flesh, and was wrought not by circumcision and the law of ordinances, but by faith. As if reminding them of the words

of the Master whom they all owned as Lord, he tells them that they are putting an intolerable yoke, a yoke which even they and their fathers had found intolerable, on the neck of the Gentile converts (Acts xv. 10, Matt. xxiii. 4) instead of His easy yoke (Matt. xi. 30). In words which have in them the very tones and accents of St Paul's teaching he declares that his hopes of salvation rest on "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ" and on that alone (Acts xv. 7—11). St Paul's report of what passed, as it were, behind the scenes, in connexion with this debate throws light on its course and on its result[1]. On arriving at Jerusalem he sought for a private conference with the acknowledged leaders, those who were known as the "pillars" of the Church at Jerusalem. To them he set forth in its fulness the Gospel which he preached among the Gentiles, and they, as indeed the Epistles of St Peter and St John shew beyond the shadow of a doubt, accepted that Gospel without reserve. On that point he would not leave room for the shadow of an uncertainty. It was agreed either that the Apostles of Circumcision should support St Paul in his firm resolve to resist the Pharisee section of the Church in their efforts to compel him to circumcise Titus, whom he had brought to Jerusalem apparently as a representative instance of what a Gentile convert could be in purity and holiness, or else that Titus should accept the sign of the covenant of Israel as a voluntary act for the sake of peace, and not as yielding to compulsion, or regarding it as the indispensable condition of his admission into fellowship with the Church of Christ[2]. In that conference, however, St Paul asserted his independence as a teacher. He had nothing to learn from Peter and James and John. They had, perhaps, something to learn from him, and they learnt it willingly. They were content to give to him and to

[1] I assume, with the great majority of commentators, that St Paul refers in Gal. ii. 1 to the visit of Acts xv., and not, as some few have thought, to that of Acts xviii. 22.

[2] I state the two alternative views which have been taken of the somewhat ambiguous language of Gal. ii. 3 ("not even Titus...*was compelled* to be circumcised"), but the former seems to me every way the most probable.

Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, and to accept a partition treaty of the wide field of mission labour, they confining themselves to the Circumcision while he and his fellow-worker went as before to the Gentiles. It was further settled as a means of uniting the two sections of the Church that he should continue his work of collecting alms for the suffering disciples at Jerusalem (Gal. ii. 1—10). The whole programme of the public conference was thus, apparently, arranged beforehand, and when James proposed that the so-called precepts of Noah, abstinence from "things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication," which had hitherto been considered sufficient for the "proselytes of the gate" in their status of incomplete union with Israel, should now be accepted as enough for the complete union of Gentile converts who were baptized, with the true Israel of God, St Paul accepted the proposal readily and without reserve (Acts xv. 13—30). It was for him, however, distinctly of the nature of a temporary *concordat.* He never appealed to its restrictive authority, though he published and rested on its concessions. He preferred, as in the long discussion of the question in 1 Cor. viii.—x., to argue the lawfulness of eating, or not eating, things that had been sacrificed to idols on entirely independent grounds.

As far as the writer of the Acts is concerned, we entirely lose sight of St Peter after the Council of Jerusalem, and the New Testament gives us but the scantiest information as to the fourteen or fifteen years that followed before his death. The one distinct fact of which we get a glimpse is a somewhat painful one. He went down to Antioch at some uncertain interval after the Council in Jerusalem, and for a time acted in the full spirit of the words he had then spoken, and as he had acted in the case of Cornelius, eating and drinking with the Gentiles, both in their common meals, and in their *Agapae* and the more sacred "breaking of bread." Some of the circumcision party, however, came down from Jerusalem, and claiming (probably, as before, without ground) to speak in the name of James, protested against his action. This, they seem to have said, was going beyond the terms of the Concordat. They were willing

to leave the Gentiles in the undisturbed exercise of their freedom, but they did not care to see their own Apostle of the Circumcision renounce the traditions of the elders, and no longer walk after the customs. The old weakness of nature which had shewed itself in the high-priest's palace displayed itself yet once more. He yielded to the pressure from without and took up a position of invidious separation from the Gentiles. In doing so he both shut them out from free and complete communion, and he tacitly condemned St Paul, who continued to do the very thing from which he had thus withdrawn. What made the matter worse was that Barnabas also was persuaded to follow his example. The current of public feeling, at least among the Gentile Christians, was strongly roused against him, and of that feeling the Apostle of the Gentiles made himself the mouthpiece and rebuked the chief of the Apostles sternly for his vacillating inconsistency (Gal. ii. 11—14). The abrupt and fragmentary account of the matter which St Paul gives hinders us from knowing how St Peter received the rebuke there given. We may well believe, however, that he accepted it with all the frankness of a noble and generous nature. His name might be used by embittered partisans and set up in rivalry against St Paul, but Cephas himself was never a member of the Cephas party at Corinth or elsewhere. Not a trace of bitterness is found in his Epistles, and to a large extent, as the notes will shew, they reproduce St Paul's teaching as freely as they do that of St James or St John. Writing to those who owed their knowledge of the Gospel mainly to St Paul and his companions, he testifies that they are standing "in the true grace of God" (1 Pet. v. 12), that they already know the things of which he puts them in remembrance and are "established in the present truth" (2 Pet. i. 12). Paul is with him his "beloved brother," and he recognises the wisdom that had been given him (2 Pet. iii. 15). He becomes a diligent student of the Epistles that contain that wisdom, and places them on the same level of authority as the other Scriptures, though he finds in them some things hard to be understood and open to misconstruction (2 Pet. iii. 16).

After the scene at Antioch the Epistles that bear his name

are our only source of information as to the later years of St Peter. It may be inferred from them that his work as an Apostle took him eastward to the city on the Euphrates, which was near the site and had inherited the name of the ancient Babylon; that Mark, his early convert, had joined him after working with Barnabas and visiting St Paul at Rome (1 Pet. v. 13, Col. iv. 10), that Silvanus, also the friend and fellow-worker of both Apostles, had come to him from the Asiatic Churches, and had reported the sufferings to which they were exposed. With less certainty we may infer that now, as before (1 Cor. ix. 5), his wife shared his journeys and his labours. (See note on 1 Pet. v. 13.) When he wrote his second Epistle it was with the foreboding that the sudden and violent death of which his Lord had told him was not far off and that it was necessary to make provision for it by taking steps for perpetuating the teaching which hitherto had been chiefly oral (2 Pet. i. 15).

Here, as far as the New Testament is concerned, our knowledge of St Peter ends. It remains for us to examine the mass of traditions and legends which have gathered round the close of his life and to ascertain, as far as we can, what fragments of definite historical fact can be disengaged from them. The silence of Scripture is, however, not without its significance as bearing on the claims which have been asserted by the Roman Church as resting on the name of Peter. Was it likely, we may ask, if her theory were true, if the whole well-being of the Church were identified with its submission to the Bishop of Rome and his successors, as inheriting his primacy, supremacy, infallibility, that not one word in the Canonical Books of Scripture should even suggest the thought that he had ever been at Rome?

CHAPTER III.

LIFE OF ST PETER. THE TRADITIONS AND LEGENDS OF THE CHURCH.

It will be convenient, I think, to give in the first place the "Legend of St Peter" in the form in which it has been

received at Rome for some thousand years or more[1], and then to enquire how far it contains any elements that may fairly be treated as historical. It may be premised that its chronology is based on the assumption that the Crucifixion took place A. D. 29.

In A. D. 33 St Peter, it is said, left Jerusalem for Antioch and founded the Church there, and after staying for seven years, appointed Euodius, or, according to another version, Ignatius, as his successor. During this period, however, he travelled on his Apostolic work, and so chanced to be at Jerusalem when St Paul came there from Damascus in A. D. 37 (Gal. i. 18). His wife travelled with him, but they lived together as bound by a vow of perpetual continence, and his daily diet was limited to a small quantity of lupines or other vegetables. During this period also he preached the Gospel to the Churches to whom his first Epistle is addressed, i. e. he reached the Northern and Western shores of the Black Sea. In A. D. 40 after the death of James the son of Zebedee (according to one form of the legend, after that of the Mother of the Lord, for which they had waited), the Twelve Apostles separated. Each contributed an Article of the Creed, St Peter giving the first, as their future bond of union, and as they divided the provinces of the Empire between them, he chose Rome, and accordingly made his way there, and became the founder and first Bishop of its Church. He reached the imperial city in A. D. 40, and returned to Jerusalem in time to share in the persecution under Herod Agrippa. On his miraculous deliverance from prison he returned to Rome, and this accordingly was the "other place" of Acts xii. 17. The decree of Claudius, however, drove him and the other Jews from Rome in A. D. 49, and so, returning to Jerusalem, he was present at the Council held there in A. D. 51. During his stay at Rome he became acquainted with Philo, the Jew of Alexandria, and converted him to the faith in Christ. On leaving Jerusalem after the Council he revisited Antioch, and there encountered

[1] I take Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints* as representing the Roman tradition in a fairly authoritative form, quoting other authorities as occasion may require.

St Paul's rebuke, either (as Augustine thought) accepting it meekly, or (as Jerome held) arranging the whole scene beforehand with his brother Apostle so that the lesson might be more vividly and dramatically impressed on the minds of the spectators. His Epistles, before he left or after his return to Rome, were written about this time (A.D. 45—55), and the Babylon from which he wrote was not the city on the Euphrates but the capital of the Empire under its mystical, symbolic name. On his return his work took a wider range. He had before lived among his own people in the Transtiberine quarter of the city appropriated to the Jews. Now he was received into the house of the Senator Pudens on the Viminal Hill, and baptized him and his two daughters Praxedis and Pudentiana. Two churches in that quarter dedicated to them as *S. Prassede* and *S. Pudenziana* preserve the memory of this tradition, and the substructures of the latter are identified with the house in which the Apostle lived for many years. At Rome, however, he encountered once more his old foe and rival, Simon the sorcerer of Samaria. According to the *Clementine Homilies* and *Recognitions* (apocryphal Ebionite books of the second century) they had met and disputed in the meantime at Cæsarea, at Tyre, at Sidon and at Berytus. Simon, worsted in all these conflicts, found his way to Rome and gained by his magic arts the favour of the Emperor Nero. The years passed on, and Peter was still at Rome when tidings reached him that his brother Apostle, whom he had not met since their dispute at Antioch, had landed at Puteoli. The Roman Christians who met St Paul at Appii Forum and the Three Taverns were sent by Peter. They worked together as friends and brothers. He preached the Gospel over all Italy and other provinces of the West. Together or separately they became the founders of the British Church. They were together when Simon the Sorcerer, as if counterfeiting an Ascension like that of Christ, declared to the Emperor that he would fly up towards Heaven, and by their united prayers they defeated the demons who were helping the impostor, and so he fell to the ground and came to a shameful end. It was

partly in consequence of this, as well as to turn aside the suspicion of being implicated in the great fire of Rome, that Nero began his persecution of the Christians. The disciples urged Peter to flee, and he left the city by the Appian Way. A little way beyond the Porta Capena (now the *Porta S. Sebastiano*), the modern Church known as "*Domine quo vadis?*" records the vision that turned him back. He saw his Master's form and he asked, "Lord, whither goest Thou?" and from His lips there came the words "I go to Rome to be crucified yet again." The Apostle felt the rebuke, turned his steps back, and was soon afterwards taken and thrown into the Tullianum, or Mamertine prison. There, in what is now the crypt-like chapel of *S. Pietro in Carcere*, he converted his gaolers, and a spring of fresh water burst out of the ground that he might baptize them. The day of execution came and the two Apostles were led out of the city on the Ostian Way. A small Oratory marks the place where they bade each other their last farewell. St Paul was led on to the spot now known as the *Tre Fontane* and beheaded. St Peter, whose wife had suffered martyrdom before him, and had been strengthened by his exhortations, was taken to the height of the Janiculum or Transtiberine region, and on the spot now marked by a small circular chapel in the churchyard of *S. Pietro in Montorio*, suffered the punishment which the Romans inflicted on slaves and outlaws and barbarians, and was nailed to the cross. He desired, in the intensity of his humility, something that would make his death more ignominious and shameful than his Master's, and at his own request he was crucified head downwards. So at last he gained the Martyr's crown, and ended the twenty-five years of his Episcopate, those "years of St Peter" which by a singular chance have never been equalled by any of his successors, till the fisherman's ring was worn and the chair of Peter filled by a Pontiff (Pius IX.) who arrogated to himself more dogmatically than any who preceded him had done, the full inheritance of the Apostle's supremacy and infallibility. When all was over, the body was interred in the Catacombs outside the city on the Appian Way, probably in those known as the

Catacombs of S. Callistus. After they had remained there for a year and a half, they were removed, probably by Jewish converts who inhabited the Transtiberine region to which the ground belonged, to the Ager Vaticanus. In the crypt of the "Confession" of the stately Temple which bears his name, and in which we find the remains of the older *Basilica* erected in his honour by Constantine, the tomb of the Apostle still attracts the reverence of the faithful, and they pass from it to the marble chair in which he is reported to have sat.

We ask as we read this elaborate narrative on what evidence does it rest. The silence of Scripture, though it cannot, of course, prove that it is baseless, is at least a presumption that it is so, and requires to be balanced by proportionately weighty proof. It is not in the nature of things probable that neither St Luke, in a history which ends in Rome, nor St Paul, in the Epistles which he writes both to and from that city, should have given the slightest hint as to such events as these, had they really come within their knowledge, and that they should have occurred and *not* come within their knowledge is, it may be said, simply incredible. The conjecture that the "other place" of Acts xii. 17 was Rome, is against all the probabilities of the case, and the assumption that the Apostle anticipates the mystic and apocalyptic application of the name of Babylon cannot be said to rest on any adequate grounds, though it is not absolutely incredible (see notes on 1 Pet. v. 13).

Turning to evidence outside the books of the New Testament it is unsatisfactory, to say the least, that the statements become fuller and more definite in proportion as we recede from the time when the events are said to have occurred. Clement of Rome (I. 5) speaks of Peter as having "borne his witness and gone to the place of glory that was due to him," but though he speaks of Paul's labours as having carried him to the "furthest bounds of the West," and of his "having borne his witness before the prefects (or rulers)," is silent as to the extent of Peter's labours or the scene of his death. It may be conceded, however, that this would not be an unnatural way of referring to the event if he assumed it to be as well known to

his readers as it was to himself. Ignatius writing to the Romans (c. 4) says incidentally "I do not command you, as Peter and Paul might do," but it is a precarious inference from this that he names them because they had suffered martyrdom at Rome. Papias (circ. A.D. 150) is referred to but not quoted, by Eusebius (*H. E.* II. 15) as stating that Peter's teaching was the basis of St Mark's Gospel, and that it was written for the disciples at Rome. Clement of Alexandria (to whom Eusebius also refers as an authority for the same statement) names Peter's parting counsel to his wife but says nothing as to the time or place of their martyrdom (*Strom.* VII. 11). The earliest statement with any approach to definiteness is that of Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth (quoted by Eusebius (*H. E.* II. 25), in his letter to the Roman Church in which he speaks of it as having, as the Corinthians had, a common interest in the teaching both of Peter and of Paul. "Both came to our Corinth and planted us as a Church there, both taught in Italy, and bore their witness at the same time." Irenæus, in like manner (III. 1. 3), speaks of the Church at Rome as having been founded by both Apostles and of both taking part in the appointment of Linus. Caius a presbyter of Rome (circ. A.D. 210) is quoted by Eusebius as speaking of the monuments (τροπαῖα) of the Apostles as being one in the Vatican and the other on the Ostian Way, which agrees with the popular tradition. Tertullian (circ. A.D. 210, *de Praescr.* c. 36) assumes as a known fact that Peter and Paul had both suffered at Rome. He also assumes that St John had been there and had escaped unhurt from a caldron of boiling oil. In a passage not found in his extant writings but quoted by Eusebius (*H. E.* II. 25) he, like Caius, appeals to the inscription on their tombs (*coemeteria*) as shewing the manner of their deaths. Origen and Cyprian are silent on the matter. The "*Domine quo vadis?*" story appears first in Ambrose (*Serm.* 68, but it is doubtful whether it is really by Ambrose and is not included in the Benedictine edition of his works).

The most that can be said of this evidence is that it leaves it fairly probable that St Peter ended his life at Rome. Of the twenty-five years of his Episcopate and of his having thus been

the first of the long line of Pontiffs there is not the shadow of any evidence till we come to Eusebius himself, who states (*H. E.* II. 14) that Peter followed Simon Magus to Rome in the reign of Claudius (A.D. 41) and there defeated him. He does not give the details of the defeat but wraps them in a vague rhetoric. The true sources of the Petrine legend are accordingly not to be found in the early Fathers of the Church, nor in any local tradition of an earlier date than the latter part of the second century. We find their starting-point, however, elsewhere, in the elaborate Apocrypha of the Ebionite heretics, the successors of the Judaising, Cephas-party of the Apostolic age. There, in the *Clementine Homilies*, we find him journeying to Cæsarea and Tyre and Sidon and Byblus and Tripolis and Laodicea and Antioch, and at well-nigh every place entering into elaborate discussions with Simon the Sorcerer. There, in the romance known as the *Recognitions* (practically a *replica* of the *Homilies*), we have Simon's journey to Rome (III. 74, 75) and Peter's intention to follow on his track and defeat him. In the still later *Acts of Peter and Paul*, the narrative opens with Peter's residence at Rome, tells how he sent messengers to meet Paul, and gives in full the legend of Simon's flight and fall, of Peter's downward crucifixion, of the *Domine quo vadis* vision, of the burial in the Vatican, near the spot where naval combats used to be exhibited. It is, of course, difficult to say how far the last-named book embodied and embellished a pre-existent tradition, how far it was the basis of a new tradition, but it is not without significance that the claims of the Bishops of Rome as heirs of the supremacy of Peter, and the legends on which those claims rest, are an inheritance not from the authentic teaching of the Apostles or the Apostolic Church, but from the Ebionite heretics whom she condemned.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST PETER.

A glance at the map of Asia Minor will shew that the provinces which are named in the first verse of the Epistle occupied the greater part of the region popularly so described, leaving out only the Southern provinces of Cilicia, Pamphylia, Pisidia and Lycia. Pontus had not come within the recorded work of St Paul or any of the Apostles, but there are indications that it had attracted a considerable Jewish population. Jews of Pontus were present at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 9). Aquila the tent-maker came from that country (Acts xviii. 2). So also did the Aquila (probably identical with Onkelos) the translator of the Hebrew Bible into Greek. Polemon, its titular king, married the Berenice of Acts xxv. 23, the sister of Herod Agrippa II., and became a proselyte to Judaism by accepting the badge of circumcision (Jos. *Ant.* xx. 7). How the Gospel had been preached there we can only conjecture. It may have been carried by the unknown pilgrims from Jerusalem. Aquila or Paul may have embraced it in their mission work during the two years in which the latter made Ephesus the centre of his activity, or Luke, whom we find at Troas doing the work of an Evangelist in Acts xvi. 8—10, may have included it in the sphere of his labours. The fact that Marcion, the heretic of the second century, confined his recognition of the Gospel history to a mutilated text of St Luke (Tertull. *adv. Marcion.* iv. 2), gives a certain confirmation to the last conjecture which is wanting for the other. Of Galatia we know, of course, much more. Most students of the New Testament are now familiar with the story of the settlement of the Gauls in that region in the 2nd century B.C., of their adoption of the orgiastic cultus of Cybele, the earth-goddess, with her eunuch priests, of the illness which led St Paul to prolong his stay among them (Gal. iv. 13), of their loving and

loyal devotion to him, of the impetuosity and fickleness which they inherited from their Keltic forefathers (Gal. i. 6), of the success of the Judaizing teachers in bewitching and perverting them (Gal. iii. 1), of St Paul's indignant, sorrowful, tenderly passionate Epistle to them. We have, however, to remember that it was not to these, the Galatians properly so called, that St Peter wrote, but to those of the Dispersion who were sojourning among them (1 Pet. i. 1). They also, however, probably received the Gospel from St Paul, and as being Jews were less likely to be the object of the proselytising intrigues of the Judaizers. Of Cappadocia we again note that it had sent pilgrims to the Pentecostal feast of Acts ii. 9. The Jewish settlers whom they represented had probably been brought into the region after the removal by Antiochus the Great of two thousand families from Mesopotamia and Babylon to Phrygia. The Western region of the province bordered so closely on Lycaonia that Lystra and Derbe were sometimes reckoned as belonging to it, and the Gospel may have penetrated to it from those cities. Little as it is prominent in the New Testament records, it numbered among its cities many that were afterwards famous in the history of the Church, Tyana the birthplace of the impostor Apollonius, and Nyssa the see of Gregory, and Cæsarea, that of his brother Basil, and Nazianzus, of the other Gregory.

The name of Asia, the proconsular province of that name, of which Ephesus was the capital, recalls to our memory the history of St Paul's three years work there (Acts xx. 31). The Churches there must have been planted by him and his companions Aquila and Priscilla, and Apollos also had been active as a preacher (Acts xviii. 24). The Temple of Artemis made it one of the head-quarters of heathen worship. The Jews of Ephesus were among St Paul's bitterest enemies. Among the believers in that city, however, among the elders who were his fellow-workers he had found those on whom his thoughts dwelt with the most entire thankfulness and satisfaction. He had not shrunk from declaring to them the whole counsel of God (Acts xx. 27). They were able to understand his knowledge in the mystery of God (Eph. iii. 4).

We have no record of any work of St Paul's in Bithynia, but we know that when he was on his second mission journey his thoughts had turned to it as a promising field for his labours (Acts xvi. 7), and that but for the overpowering intimations in which he recognised the guidance of the Spirit of God, he would have turned his footsteps thither. What has been said above as to the probability of St Luke having extended his labours as a preacher of the Gospel from Troas to Pontus holds good also of this nearer region. The report made by Pliny in his official letter, as Proconsul of Bithynia, to the Emperor Trajan (circ. A.D. 110) shews that it must have manifested a singular receptivity for the Truth. He describes (*Epp.* X. 96) multitudes, both men and women, of every age and rank, as embracing the new religion, the temples almost deserted, and the market for sacrifices finding scarcely a single purchaser.

We are able without much risk of error to determine both the occasion and the date of the First Epistle which St Peter addressed to the Jewish Christians of these Churches. Silvanus had come to him bringing tidings that they were exposed to a fiery trial of persecution (1 Pet. iv. 12). They were accused of being evil-doers, preaching revolutionary doctrines (1 Pet. ii. 15, 16). The very name of Christian then, as afterwards under Pliny's *régime*, exposed them to odium and outrage (1 Pet. iv. 16). The teachers to whom they owed so much, Paul and Aquila and Luke, were no longer with them. The state of things described in the First, and yet more in the Second Epistle, exactly answers to that which we find in St Paul's Epistles to Timothy, and we can scarcely be wrong in assigning them to the same period. When a wave of fanatic hatred directed against the name of Christian was flowing well-nigh over the length and breadth of the Empire, rulers in the provinces were but too likely to follow the example which Nero had set them in the capital. The Apostle felt that he could not withhold his words of comfort and counsel from those who were thus suffering, and though, in scrupulous conformity with the partition treaty to which St Paul refers in Gal. ii. 9, he addresses himself primarily, if not exclusively, to

those who looked to him as the Apostle of the Circumcision, we may well believe that he did not shut out the Gentiles from his thoughts and prayers. The absence of any messages sent by name to those to whom he writes favours, though it does not prove, the conclusion that he had not known them personally. In the stress laid on their being in "the true grace of God" (1 Pet. v. 12), in the admission that they had known all that he had to teach them (2 Pet. i. 12), in the tribute borne to the wisdom of his beloved brother Paul (2 Pet. iii. 15, 16), yet more in the reproduction, which can hardly have been other than deliberate, of St Paul's most characteristic thoughts and phrases, we trace an almost anxious desire to shew that he and the Apostle of the Gentiles were still of one mind and heart in the fellowship of the Truth. As far as the First Epistle is concerned it does not appear that he was cognisant of any controversies or heresies that called for special warnings and reproofs. Possibly the storm of persecution had driven the false teachers who shrank from martyrdom into holes and corners. Possibly Silvanus had dwelt, naturally enough, on the more immediate and threatening dangers and had left the others untold.

As a preparation for the study of the Epistle, it will be well to give a brief analysis of its contents, tracing the sequence of its thoughts. The reader who has followed that analysis will be prepared for two or three other lines of enquiry, the results of which will, it is believed, be in many ways interesting and suggestive. We have seen that the influences which were chiefly at work in fashioning St Peter's character were (1) the teaching of our Lord as recorded in the Gospels, (2) his association with St James, the brother of the Lord, in the superintendence of the Church of the Circumcision, (3) his friendship with St John, (4) his knowledge of St Paul's teaching as communicated orally or embodied in his Epistles. It is believed that a careful study of the two Epistles now before us will shew that they present many traces, sometimes in their thoughts, sometimes in their words and phrases, of each of these influences. For a fuller examination of the parallelisms that thus present themselves, the reader is referred to the foregoing life of the Apostle and to the

notes. It will be enough in this place to present the results in a tabulated form so that he may follow up the line of enquiry for himself.

A. ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST PETER.

Chap. I. The Apostle salutes the sojourners of the "dispersion" of the Asiatic Churches (1, 2) and blesses God for His mercies to them (3, 4). The joy and salvation which spring from these more than balance their afflictions (5—9). Of that salvation prophets and angels sought to know, yet knew not fully (10—12). Looking to it, men should learn to be patient and holy (13—17), leading the life of those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ (18—21), but from their faith and hope should spring the love which belongs to the life of those who are regenerated by the indwelling Word of God (22—25).

Chap. II. As thus begotten again, they should lead the lives of new-born babes in their simplicity and innocence (1—3), coming to the Lord as the living stone on which they who believe are built up (4—6), while it is a stone of stumbling to those who believe not (7—9). They are a royal priesthood and the people of God, and their lives as subjects under rulers, slaves under masters, should be such as to refute all slanders (9—18). In all their sufferings they should follow in the footsteps of the patience and meekness of Christ, the shepherd of their souls (19—25).

Chap. III. The duty of submission involved in the relations of society extends to wives as well as subjects and slaves. Christian wives must seek to win their heathen or Jewish husbands, not by argument, but by their life (1—6). Husbands in their turn must remember that authority implies the duty of protection (7). For all alike there are the broad rules of holy living, such as Christ had taught (8—11). Those who so live may trust in God's protection, and their highest blessedness will come through suffering wrongfully (12—14). They will know how to defend themselves, but their best defence will be the silent witness of their lives (15, 16). The suffering of Christ might teach them that death might be but the entrance to a wider sphere of activity. He had preached to those who had perished in the Flood (18—20). In that flood, the washing of the world from its pollutions, they might see the type of the baptism which was to them, when united with the faith of a

good conscience, the means of salvation (21). They also, though they might suffer, would share in his Resurrection and Ascension (22).

Chap. IV. But Christ suffered that we, suffering with Him, might cease from sin and live to God (1, 2). The evil past must be left behind, even though men wonder at us and accuse us (3, 4). We and they shall stand hereafter before the Judge whose righteousness and mercy were shewn in a Gospel preached to the dead as well as to the living, in judgments that led to life (5, 6). Looking to that judgment as not far off, men should love one another, and use all gifts they have received from God as faithful stewards (7—11). If in the meantime there comes a fiery trial, that should be cause of joy. To suffer as a Christian was a thing to thank God for (12—16). Not even the righteous could be saved easily, but what then would be the end of the unrighteous? In that thought, the sufferers might commend their souls to God (17—19).

Chap. V. From the body of believers at large the Apostle turns to men who like himself are office-bearers, elders or bishops, and exhorts them to feed the flock, and so to do their work that they may receive a crown of glory from the Chief Shepherd (1—4). The younger in age or office are, in like manner, to be subject to the elder, mutual subjection being the very law of the Church's life. Not the haughty, but the lowly, are exalted by the hand of God. All anxious care about work or position may be left in His hands (5—7). Yet the absence of care is not to lead to carelessness. Christians need to watch, for the great Enemy is watching for them (8, 9). In view of their conflict with him or his agents, the Apostle ends with a prayer for their preservation and perfectness (10), and ends with commending Silvanus to them, and sending salutations from Marcus and a female disciple at Babylon.

B. COMPARISON OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST PETER WITH OUR LORD'S TEACHING.

1 Pet.		
i. 2	"the elect"	Mark xiii. 21, 22; John xiii. 18, xv. 16
3	"hath begotten us again"	John iii. 5
8	"ye see him not, yet believing"	John xx. 29
13	"gird up the loins of your mind"	Luke xii. 35
16	"be ye holy; for I am holy"	Matt. v. 48

1 Pet.		
i. 17	"without respect of persons"	Matt. xxii. 16
18	"redeemed ... with the precious blood of Christ"	Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45
—	"received by tradition of your fathers"	Matt. xv. 2—6; Mark vii. 3—13
19	"blood of Christ as of a lamb"	John i. 29
20	"before the foundation of the world"	Matt. xxv. 34; Luke xi. 50
22	"love one another"	John xv. 12
ii. 4	"a stone disallowed..."	Matt. xxi. 42—44
5	"built up a spiritual house"	Matt. xvi. 18
12	"speak against you as evil doers"	John xviii. 30
—	"the day of visitation"	Luke xix. 44
15	"put to silence" (φιμοῦν)	Mark i. 25, iv. 39
16	"as free"	John viii. 32
19	"this is thankworthy" (χάρις)	Luke vi. 32
—	"suffering wrongfully"	Matt. v. 39
21	"that ye should follow his steps"	Matt. x. 38, xvi. 24; Luke xiv. 27
23	"when he was reviled..."	Matt. xxvi. 63, xxvii. 14
24	"by whose stripes"	Matt. xxvii. 26; Mark xv. 15
25	"as sheep going astray"	Matt. ix. 36, xviii. 12, 13
—	"the Shepherd of your souls"	John x. 16
iii. 1	"may be won" (κερδηθήσωνται)	Matt. xviii. 15
9	"not rendering evil for evil"	Matt. v. 39
14	"if ye suffer for righteousness' sake"	Matt. v. 10
16	"they.....who falsely accuse" (ἐπηρεάζοντες)	Matt. v. 44; Luke vi. 28
20	"waited in the days of Noe"	Matt. xxiv. 37, 38
—	"wherein few...were saved"	Luke xiii. 23
iv. 5	"who shall give account"	Luke xvi. 2
7	"the end of all things is at hand"	Matt. xxiv. 6—14
8	"charity shall cover the multitude of sins"	Luke vii. 47
10	"as good stewards"	Luke xii. 42, xvi. 1—12
11	"that God in all things may be glorified"	Matt. v. 16
13	"but rejoice"	Matt. v. 12

1 Pet.		
iv. 14	"if ye be reproached.....happy are ye"	Matt. v. 10
18	"if the righteous scarcely be saved"	Matt. xxiv. 22
19	"commit the keeping of their souls"	Luke xxiii. 46
v. 2	"feed the flock of God"	John xxi. 16
3	"neither as being lords over God's heritage"	Matt. xx. 25; Mark x. 42
5	"likewise, ye younger"	Luke xxii. 26
7	"casting all your care upon him"	Matt. vi. 25, 28
8	"your adversary (*ἀντίδικος*) the devil"	Matt. v. 25
10	"settle you" (*θεμελιόω*)	Matt. vii. 25; Luke vi. 48

C. COMPARISON OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST PETER WITH THE EPISTLE OF ST JAMES.

1 Pet.		
i. 1	"the strangers scattered throughout..."	James i. 1
3	"hath begotten us again"	— i. 18
23	"born again...by the word of God"	
6	"through manifold temptations"	— i. 2
7	"the trial of your faith"	— i. 3
12	"the angels desire to look into" (*παρακύπτειν*)	— i. 25
17	"without respect of persons"	— ii. 1—4
22	"ye have purified your souls"	— iv. 8
24	"the grass withereth"	— i. 10, 11
ii. 1	"laying aside all malice"	— i. 21
iv. 8	"charity shall cover the multitude of sins"	— v. 20
v. 5	"God resisteth the proud"	— iv. 6
6	"humble yourselves therefore..."	— iv. 10
9	"whom resist stedfast in the faith"	— iv. 7

D. COMPARISON OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST PETER WITH THE EPISTLES AND REVELATION OF ST JOHN.

1 Pet.		
i. 2, 19	"the blood of Jesus Christ"	1 John i. 7
22	"ye have purified your souls"	— iii. 3
—	"see that ye love one another"	— iv. 11, 12
ii. 9	"a royal priesthood"	Rev. i. 6, v. 10

E. COMPARISON OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST PETER WITH THE EPISTLES OF ST PAUL AND THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

1 Pet.		
i. 2	"elect according to the foreknowledge of God"	Col. iii. 12; Rom. viii. 29
—	"through sanctification"	Rom. vi. 19, 22
—	"sprinkling of the blood of Jesus"	Rom. iii. 25; Heb. ix. 13
—	"grace unto you, and peace"	Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 3 and other Epistles
3	"blessed be the God and Father"	2 Cor. i. 3; Eph. i. 3
—	"hath begotten us again"	Tit. iii. 5
4	"an inheritance incorruptible"	Acts xx. 32; Col. iii. 24; 1 Cor. ix. 25
5	"kept by the power of God"	Phil. iv. 7
—	"salvation ready to be revealed"	Rom. xiii. 11; 1 Thess. v. 8
7	"gold...tried with fire"	1 Cor. iii. 13
—	"honour and glory"	Rom. ii. 7, 10; 1 Tim. i. 17
8	"joy unspeakable"	Rom. viii. 26; 2 Cor. xii. 4
11	"what, or what manner of time"	1 Thess. v. 1
13	"gird up the loins of your mind"	Eph. vi. 14
—	"be sober"	1 Thess. v. 6, 8
14	"obedient children (literally, *children of obedience*)"	Eph. v. 6
—	"not fashioning yourselves"	Rom. xii. 2

1 Pet.		
i. 18	"your vain conversation"	Gal. i. 13; Eph. iv. 22
—	"received by tradition from your fathers"	Gal. i. 14
20	"before the foundation of the world"	Eph. i. 4
22	"unfeigned love"	1 Tim. i. 5
ii. 2	"the sincere milk of the word"	1 Cor. x. 3; Heb. v. 12
	"sincere (literally, *unadulterated*)"	2 Cor. ii. 17, iv. 2
5	"spiritual sacrifices"	Rom. xii. 1
—	"acceptable to God"	Rom. xv. 16, 31; 2 Cor. vi. 2
6	"a chief corner stone"	Eph. ii. 20
8	"a stone of stumbling"	Rom. ix. 33
9	"a peculiar people"	Eph. i. 4; 1 Thess. v. 9; 2 Thess. ii. 14
—	"called you out of darkness into his marvellous light"	Acts xxvi. 18; Rom. xiii. 12
10	"in time past were not a people"	Rom. ix. 25
11	"lusts, which war against the soul"	Rom. vii. 23
13	"submit yourselves to every ordinance"	Rom. xiii. 1
13	"the king as supreme"	Rom. xiii. 1
16	"as free"	Rom. vi. 16; 1 Cor. vii. 22
18	"servants, be subject"	Eph. vi. 5, 8; Col. iii. 22; 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2
24	"being dead to sins"	Rom. vi. 2, 11; Gal. ii. 19
iii. 1	"likewise, ye wives..."	Eph. v. 22, 24; Col. iii. 18
—	"be won by" (κερδηθήσωνται)	1 Cor. ix. 19, 20
3	"plaiting the hair"	1 Tim. ii. 9
4	"the hidden man"	Rom. vii. 22; 2 Cor. iv. 16; Eph. iii. 16
6	"whose daughters ye are"	Rom. iv. 11, 12
7	"the weaker vessel"	1 Thess. iv. 4
8	"pitiful" (εὔσπλαγχνοι)	Eph. iv. 32
9	"not rendering evil for evil"	Rom. xii. 17; 1 Thess. v. 16
13	"who is he that will harm you"	Rom. viii. 33
—	"followers (μιμηταὶ) of that which is good"	1 Cor. iv. 16; Eph. v. 1

1 Pet.		
iii. 16	"having a good conscience"	Acts xxiii. 1, xxiv. 16; 1 Tim. i. 19
18	"the just for the unjust"	Rom. v. 6
—	"in the flesh...by the Spirit"	Rom. i. 3, 4; 1 Tim. iii. 16
21	"baptism...by the resurrection of Jesus Christ"	Rom. vi. 4, 5
22	"who is gone into heaven"	1 Tim. iii. 16; Eph. ii. 6
—	"angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him"	Eph. i. 21; Col. i. 16, ii. 15; Phil. ii. 10
iv. 1	"he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin"	Rom. vi. 7—11
2	"the will of God"	1 Thess. iv. 3
3	"the time past of our life may suffice"	Rom. xiii. 11, 12
4	"the same excess of riot" (ἀσωτία)	Eph. v. 18; Tit. i. 6
5	"who shall give account"	1 Cor. iv. 5
6	"judged according to men in the flesh...live according to God"	1 Cor. v. 5, xi. 32
7	"the end of all things is at hand"	1 Tim. iv. 1; Rom. xiii. 12 1 Cor. xv. 51; 1 Thess. iv. 17
9	"use hospitality"	Rom. xii. 13; 1 Tim. iii. 2
10	"as every man hath received the gift"	Rom. xii. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 4, 28
11	"as the oracles of God"	Rom. iii. 2
—	"which God giveth" (χορηγεῖ)	2 Cor. ix. 10
—	"that God in all things may be glorified"	1 Cor. x. 31
13	"partakers of Christ's sufferings"	Col. i. 24
v. 1	"elders (πρεσβύτεροι)...taking the	Acts xx. 17, 28; Tit. i. 5,
2	oversight (ἐπισκοποῦντες)"	7
3	"ensamples (τύποι) to the flock"	2 Thess. iii. 9; Phil. iii. 17
8	"be sober, be vigilant"	1 Thess. v. 6
10	"make you perfect"	1 Cor. i. 10
—	"stablish"	2 Thess. ii. 17

F. COMPARISON OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST PETER WITH HIS TEACHING AS RECORDED IN THE ACTS.

1 Pet.			
i.	17	"without respect of persons"	Acts x. 34
	20	"foreordained"	— ii. 23, iii. 18
	—	"manifested in these last times"	— ii. 17
	21	"God, that raised him up from the dead"	— ii. 32—36, iii. 15, iv. 10
ii.	4	"a living stone, disallowed"	— iv. 11
	8	"whereunto also they were appointed"	— i. 16
	17	"honour all men"	— x. 28
iii.	18	"Christ...the just"	— iii. 14

The above parallelisms are, it will be seen, sometimes in thought, sometimes (and here the Greek, for the most part, makes the coincidence clearer) in the use of unusual or characteristic words. It does not follow, of course, that the agreement implies derivation in each single instance. What does follow may, it is believed, be thus briefly stated.

(1) They shew, and this is my main object in bringing them together in this tabulated form, that the Epistle ascribed to St Peter indicates the presence of elements of thought corresponding to the influences which we know to have been working on him in the several stages of his life.

(2) They shew that by far the most dominant of these influences had been the personal teaching of our Lord, and the personal or written teaching of St Paul. The mind of St Peter is, as it were, saturated with thoughts and phrases derived from the two sources, and thus over and above the direct references to each, they furnish an indirect proof of the genuineness of the documents in which we now find them, sc. the Gospels and the Epistles of St Paul.

(3) They prove, in regard to the last-named writings, that the idea of an antagonism between St Peter and St Paul, in which some historical critics have found the secret of the development of the Apostolic Church, is singularly at variance with facts, if we admit the genuineness of the First Epistle that bears the name of the former. The wretched caricature of an Apostle, a thing of shreds and patches, which struts and fumes through the Ebionite romances known as the *Clementine Homilies* and *Recognitions*, would not have been likely to write with thoughts and phrases essentially Pauline flowing from his pen at every turn.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE. It remains in conclusion to state briefly the external evidence for the reception of the First Epistle of St Peter into the New Testament Canon. The internal has, it is believed, been already stated with adequate fulness.

(1) The Second Epistle, even were we to assume its spuriousness, bears witness to the existence of a Letter already extant and of so much authority as to tempt a pseudonymous writer to mask himself as following it up by a second.

(2) Polycarp quotes the Epistle frequently, though he does not name it (*Phil.* c. II. v. VI. VIII.), and Eusebius (*H. E.* III. 39) says that Papias did the same. Irenæus (IV. 9. 2; 16. 5) both quotes and names, as also does Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* III. p. 544, 584, 585). Origen (Euseb. *H. E.* VI. 25) quotes it frequently and speaks of both Epistles, acknowledging, however, that they stand on a different footing as regards authority, and that the second was much questioned. Tertullian (*Scorp.* c. 12, 13) quotes and names it. It is found, though the second is not found, in the Peschito or early Syriac version. The only fact of any weight on the other side is that it is not named in the Muratorian Fragment. From the time of Tertullian the authority of the Epistle, it need hardly be said, has remained unquestioned, till within the last century, when it has been attacked by some German critics, De Wette, Baur, Schwegler, on purely subjective and, it is believed, quite inadequate grounds.

CHAPTER V.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST PETER.

The Second Epistle ascribed to St Peter comes before us, as far as external evidence is concerned, somewhat heavily weighted. Origen (circ. A.D. 230) is the earliest writer who names it, and in doing so, he admits that its authority was questioned. "Peter, on whom the Church of Christ is built, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, has left us one Epistle generally accepted (ὁμολογουμένην), and if you will, a Second, for this is questioned." (Euseb. *H. E.* VI. 25.) In addition to this he often quotes the First Epistle as "*the* Catholic Epistle." It had not made its way to greater acceptance when the Peschito Syriac Version of the New Testament was made, nor when the Muratorian Canon was drawn up, and finds no place in either of them. The latter, however, it should be noted, does not take in even the First Epistle, and so far leaves the two standing as on the same footing. In Eusebius we find traces of a transition stage, but the old doubts still continued, and obviously, as far as his own mind was concerned, preponderated. "We" he says "have not received that which is current as the Second Epistle as having a place in the Canon, but as it seemed to many to be edifying, it was studied with the other Scriptures." Afterwards he speaks of knowing only one genuine Epistle among the so-called writings of Peter (*H. E.* III. 3), and again classes the so-called Second Epistle with the Epistles of St James and Jude, as "questioned (ἀντιλεγόμενα) but yet acknowledged by most people" (*H. E.* III. 25). Jerome (*Script. Eccl.* I.) reproduces the same balanced state of feeling. The Second Epistle was "rejected by very many on account of its difference in style." He, however, included it in his Latin Version, known as the Vulgate, and this probably helped to determine its acceptance by the Western Church. Doubts lingered in Asia Minor and Syria, and were expressed by

Gregory of Nazianzus and Theodore of Mopsuestia. These, however, gradually gave way, and the Epistle appeared in the Philoxenian or later Syriac version, and was received into the Canon by the Councils of Laodicea (A. D. 372) and Carthage (A. D. 397).

On the other side we have what may possibly be allusive references to the Epistle, or even quotations from it, though it is not named. Barnabas, or the Epistle that bears his name (c. xv.), brings in the thought that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years" (2 Pet. iii. 8), but then this was but a reproduction of the Jewish thought of a Millennial Sabbath of a thousand years, and does not prove that he derived it from our Epistle. Justin (*Dial. c. Tryph.* c. 89) quotes the same words, but it is, of course, uncertain from what source he drew them, and the same holds good of their citation by Irenæus (v. 23, 28). Theophilus of Antioch in speaking of "men of God as borne on by the Spirit and so becoming prophets" (*ad Autol.* II. 2), of the Word or LOGOS of God as a "lamp shining in a narrow dwelling" (II. 1), reminds us so closely of 2 Pet. i. 18—21, that it is difficult to believe that he was not acquainted with the Epistle. Origen (in works, however, of which we have only Rufinus's Latin translation) once and again quotes the Epistle as Peter's: "Peter speaks through the two trumpets of his Epistles" (*Hom.* IV. *in Josh.*); "Peter says, Ye have been made partakers of the Divine Nature" (*Hom.* IV. *in Levit.*).

As far as evidence from without goes then the case does not go beyond a fair measure of proof that the Epistle was known and read in the second century, but that in spite of its manifest claim to be by the Apostle, it was not generally accepted.

We turn to the internal evidence, and here again there is, at first sight, an impression unfavourable to its genuineness. The opening description which the writer gives of himself is different from that of the First Epistle. So also is the general style of language and tenor of thought. It dwells less on the Pauline thoughts of redemption, election, grace, salvation, less on the trials of persecution, and the necessity of patience, and

not without a certain tone of agitation, and a fulness of rhetorical amplification, speaks at length of the dangers of false teachers (c. ii.) and the mocking taunts of scoffers at the delay of the Lord's coming (c. iii.). There is, it has been said, an ostentation in the reference to the Transfiguration (i. 16), in the patronising tone in which the writer speaks of St Paul (iii. 15, 16), which is not in harmony with the naturalness and simplicity of the First Epistle.

It remains to be seen, however, how far a more thorough examination of the Epistle confirms or balances these conclusions. And here we have to deal with a large number of circumstantial details, each of them, it may be, comparatively inconclusive in itself, and yet tending, in their accumulated weight, to turn the scale of evidence.

(1) It is not probable that a pseudonymous writer would have begun his work by the use of the name "Symeon," which at once presented a startling variation from the opening of the First Epistle.

(2) In spite of the admitted difference of style, there are not a few instances in which words comparatively unfamiliar in other books are common to the two Epistles.

2 Pet.		1 Pet.
i. 1	"precious" (*τίμιος*)	i. 7, 19
2	"grace and peace be multiplied"	— i. 2
3	praises (*ἀρετὰς*)—virtue (*ἀρετῇ*)	— ii. 9
5	"add" (*ἐπιχορηγήσατε*)	— iv. 11
7	"love of the brethren" (*φιλαδελφία*)	— i. 22, iii. 8
10	"calling and election"	— i. 2, ii. 21
16	"eyewitnesses" (*ἐπόπται*)	— ii. 12
19, 20	Stress laid on Prophecy.	— i. 10—12
ii. 1	"the Lord that bought them" (*ἀγορράσαντα*)	— i. 18
2	"lasciviousness" (*ἀσέλγεια*)	— iv. 3
5	Reference to history of Noah.	— iii. 20
14	"cursed children" (literally, "children of a curse")	— i. 14

2 Pet.		
iii. 5	History of Deluge again.	1 Pet. iii. 20
14	"without spot or blemish"	— i. 19
15	St Paul's teaching recognised.	— v. 12

(3) On comparing the Second Epistle with the same New Testament writings with which the First Epistle has been compared, it will be seen that here also we have like points of contact and resemblance. These we give, as before, in a tabulated form.

A. COMPARISON OF THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST PETER WITH ST PAUL'S EPISTLES.

2 Pet.		
i. 2	"knowledge" (*ἐπίγνωσις*)	Rom. i. 28, iii. 20 et al.
3	"godliness" (*εὐσέβεια*)	1 Tim. ii. 2, iii. 16
6	"temperance" (*ἐγκράτεια*)	Gal. v. 23
11	"an entrance" (*εἴσοδος*)	1 Thess. i. 9, ii. 1
13	"tabernacle" (*σκήνωμα*)	2 Cor. v. 1—3
16	"fables" (*μῦθοι*)	1 Tim. i. 4, ii. 7
17	"honour and glory" (*τιμὴ καὶ δόξα*)	Rom. ii. 7
21	"men of God"	1 Tim. vi. 11
ii. 1	"privily shall bring in" (*παρεισάξουσιν*)	Gal. ii. 4
—	"heresies"	1 Cor. xi. 19
3	"covetousness" (*πλεονεξία*) as characterising the false teachers.	1 Tim. vi. 5; Tit. i. 11
12	"perish in their own corruption"	1 Cor. iii. 17
13	"riot in the daytime"	Rom. xiii. 13
19	"promise them liberty"	1 Cor. x. 29; Gal. v. 13
—	"servants of corruption"	Rom. vi. 16, viii. 21
iii. 1	"your pure (*εἰλικρινεῖς*) minds"	Phil. i. 10
2	"prophets" and "apostles"	Eph. ii. 20, iii. 5
4	"since the fathers fell asleep"	1 Cor. xi. 30; 1 Thess. iv. 15
7	"reserved (*τεθησαυρισμένοι*) unto fire"	Rom. ii. 5
9	"doth not will that any should perish"	1 Tim. ii. 4
15	"the long-suffering of God"	Rom. ii. 4, ix. 22

B. COMPARISON OF THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST PETER WITH THE GOSPELS.

2 Pet.		
i. 13	"tabernacle"	Matt. xvii. 4
14	"as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me"	John xxi. 18
15	"decease" (ἔξοδος)	Luke ix. 31
17	The "voice from heaven"	Matt. xvii. 5
19	"a light shining" (λύχνος φαίνων)	John v. 35
ii. 5	Reference to Deluge and the Cities of the Plain.	Matt. xxiv. 37; Luke xvii. 26—30
9	"under punishment" (κολαζομένους)	Matt. xxv. 46
17	"clouds that are carried with a tempest" (λαίλαψ)	Mark iv. 37
19	"servants of corruption"	John viii. 34
20	"the latter end (τὰ ἔσχατα) is worse with them than the beginning (τῶν πρώτων)"	Matt. xii. 45
22	Juxtaposition of swine and dogs.	Matt. vii. 6
iii. 10	"the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night"	Matt. xxiv. 43

C. COMPARISON OF THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST PETER WITH THE EPISTLE OF ST JAMES.

2 Pet.		
i. 9	"is blind...hath forgotten" (λήθην λαβών)	James i. 23, 24
ii. 14	"beguiling" (δελεάζοντες)	— i. 14

D. COMPARISON OF THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST PETER WITH THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

2 Pet.		
i. 7	"godliness" (εὐσέβεια)	Acts iii. 12
17	"when there came (φερομένης) such a voice"	— ii. 2
21	"as they were moved (φερόμενοι) by the Holy Ghost"	— ii. 2

2 Pet.		
ii. 1	"denying the Lord (δεσπότην) that bought them"	Acts iv. 24
13	"to riot in the day time"	— ii. 15

I give these of course, in each case, with a *valeat quantum*, and do not say that, even taken collectively, they amount to a proof of identity of authorship. It will, however, I think, be admitted that they at least shew that the Second Epistle that bears St Peter's name comes from one who lived at the same time and in the same atmosphere of thought as the First, that he was familiar with the same writings and used the same words and phrases. I am unwilling to lay stress on the bare fact that the writer affirms that he was a witness of the Transfiguration and heard the voice from heaven (2 Pet. i. 16, 17); for that, on the assumption of personated authorship, would be part of the personation. But it is, I think, a matter for consideration that here also, in this dwelling on personal reminiscences of the Gospel history, the writer of the Second Epistle stands on the same footing as the writer of the First. For he too speaks of his position as "a witness of the sufferings of Christ" (1 Pet. v. 1), and paints the scene of those sufferings (1 Pet. ii. 21—24) no less vividly than the writer of the Second Epistle paints that of the glory of the Transfiguration. And there is, it may be added, a kind of naturalness, almost if not altogether beyond the reach of art, in the way in which, by a subtle yet perfectly intelligible association of ideas, the recollection of that scene leads to thoughts and words like the "tabernacle" and "decease," which had actually been associated with it. There is, if I mistake not, a like naturalness in the reference to our Lord's prediction of the manner of the Apostle's death (John xxi. 18) (not recorded, it will be remembered, in any of the first three Gospels), in 2 Pet. i. 14, as compared with the exhortation in 1 Pet. v. 2, which reproduces the command to "feed the flock of God," which must have been associated inseparably with that prediction in the Apostle's memory (John xxi. 15—17).

It remains to enquire whether the admitted difference in thought and style can be adequately explained on the hypothesis of identity of authorship. I venture to think that that explanation is found in the singular parallelism between the second chapter of this Epistle and the Epistle of St Jude. That parallelism is so striking that it is impossible to resist the conclusion that one writer used the materials furnished him by the other, or that both derived them from some common source. Reserving the discussion of these alternatives for the *Introduction to the Epistle of St Jude*, I will assume here that the latter Epistle was the earlier of the two. What the facts before us suggest is then as follows. The First Epistle had been written and sent off by Silvanus. When he wrote it the Apostle was thinking chiefly of the persecutions which were pressing on the Asiatic Churches, and he dwells naturally on the truths which were the ground of hope and comfort for the sufferers, on the conduct which would be the best *apologia* when they stood before the tribunal of the magistrate or in the *forum domesticum* of the family, face to face with their accusers. Soon afterwards, other tidings come, which are more alarming and speak of other dangers. He hears of teachers like those described in the Pastoral Epistles, "departing from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, having their conscience seared as with a redhot iron" (1 Tim. iv. 1, 2), destitute of the truth, looking on the profession of godliness as a means of making money (1 Tim. vi. 5), covetous, boasters, proud, without natural affection,..."lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God" (2 Tim. iii. 1—7), boasting of "a science (*gnosis*) falsely so called" (1 Tim. vi. 20). In addition to these there are mockers both within and without the Church, who, holding that the Resurrection is past already (2 Tim. ii. 18), held also as a natural consequence that there was to be no Second Advent of the Lord to judge the quick and the dead (2 Pet. iii. 1—4), and scoffed at the promise of His coming. The Epistle of St Jude is placed in his hands as giving a description of these teachers. It is not an improbable supposition that it may have been sent to him by James, the brother of the Lord, with whom, as his brother Apostle of the Circumcision, he would

naturally be in communication, or even that Jude himself may have been the bearer of his own letter. He is, if one may venture so to speak, startled and horror-stricken at the picture thus brought before him. He must write once more to the Asiatic Churches, warning them against this new form of evil, and throwing all the weight of his authority into the scale of those who were contending for the faith, for purity, for holiness, for the hope of the Resurrection to eternal life. It would not be enough merely to pass on the letter of St Jude. His own name was better known, and would carry greater weight with it. It is a small point, but one which, as far as it goes, falls in with the view thus suggested, that the form of the Apostle's name in the Second Epistle (Symeon) is that which appears in the record in Acts xv. 14, as used by St James and current in the Church of Jerusalem. If the disciple who brought the letter of St Jude came from that Church, and was employed by St Peter as an amanuensis, what was more natural than that he should employ that form?

The manner in which the writer of the Second Epistle deals with that of St Jude is in exact agreement with this hypothesis, and the hypothesis explains phenomena that would otherwise present considerable difficulty. He adapts it, as it were, to the use not only of the Hellenistic Jews, but of the proselytes from Heathenism, and even the uncircumcised converts, whom he was anxious to reach. He will not put a stumbling-block in their way, by referring to the tradition of the nature of the fall of the angels as being like in kind to the sin of the Cities of the Plain, which was found in the apocryphal Book of Enoch, and was not found (except in a passage very variously interpreted, Gen. vi. 4) in any Canonical Scripture. For a like reason, he turns from the tradition or legend of the dispute of Michael and Satan about the body of Moses (Jude, verse 9), and so generalises the statement that it more naturally refers to the history of Joshua the son of Jozedek, in Zech. iii. 1—5, and does not reproduce the quotation from the Book of Enoch (Jude, verse 14), which might have seemed so well suited to his purpose. With the characteristic tendency, shewn in the First Epistle, to dwell on the history of Noah, he adds that to the list of St Jude's

warning examples (2 Pet. ii. 5). He expands the few words in which St Jude speaks of the "mockers" of the last days (Jude, verse 18), so as to bring before his readers the special form of mockery of which he had heard as current among them (2 Pet. iii. 1—10).

On these grounds then, (1) of an adequate amount of agreement as to thought and language between the two Epistles, and (2) of an adequate explanation of the differences that must be admitted to present themselves on a comparison, I am disposed to think that there is enough to turn the scale in favour of the later acceptance of the Second Epistle by the Church at large, as against the earlier doubts. It may be added finally, that these doubts themselves, and the consequent delay in the acceptance, were what might have been expected under the circumstances of the case. A time of persecution necessarily interrupted the free communication of one Church with another. It was not easy for an encyclical letter to be read publicly in the meetings of the Churches to which it was addressed, when those meetings could not be held without the danger of violence and outrage. Nor must we forget that the false teachers who were condemned by the Epistle had an interest in suppressing it as far as that suppression lay within their power. They would disclaim its authority. It would not be strange that they should throw doubts on its authorship, and that those doubts should gain a certain degree of currency and be reproduced even by those who had not the same motive for suggesting them.

It remains that we should give a short outline of the contents of the Epistle.

ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST PETER.

Chap. I. The Apostle addresses those in the Asiatic Churches who were sharers with him in the same precious faith (1, 2). On the strength of God's gracious gifts to them, he calls on them to go on, in the might of God's promises and their fellowship in the Divine Nature, from one grace of character to another (3—7). Such progress is the condition of knowledge. Without it there is mental blindness and short-

sightedness (8, 9), and they cannot make their calling and election sure (10, 11). The sense of this dependence of knowledge on practice makes the writer anxious to remind them of what they already knew. Life was passing away, and the end would come quickly; and therefore he would not delay to provide for his departure (12—15). He could speak with full confidence, for he had seen the excellent glory and heard the voice from Heaven on the Holy Mount (16—18). But even a surer attestation than that was to be found in the abiding presence of the Prophetic Word, the same now as it was of old, making the words of the men of God not their own words, but those of the Holy Ghost (19—21).

Chap. II. As there had been false prophets before, so are there false teachers now, denying the Lord that bought them, making proselytes as a means of gain (1—3). The history of the past shews that God's judgment is against such men. They shall perish as the angels that sinned did; as did the world of the ungodly in the Flood; as did the cities of the Plain (4—8). Yet in each of these cases those that remained faithful were saved, and so shall it be now (9). The vices that most characterised these false teachers were their impurity, their self-assertion, their railing, their wanton and luxurious living, their covetousness (10—14), reproducing in all these points the character of Balaam (15, 16). Waterless wells and tempest-driven clouds, these were the fit symbols of these boasters of liberty who were slaves of corruption (17—19). Whatever knowledge they had once had of Christ did but aggravate their guilt, and their last days were worse than the first. It had been better for them never to have known the truth than to have known it and then returned, like the unclean beasts of the proverb, to their uncleanness (20—22).

Chap. III. The Apostle, reminding his readers of his previous letter, bids them keep in remembrance what they had heard from the Apostles and prophets of the Church as to the Coming of the Lord (1 2). They would meet scoffers who taunted them with the delay of that Coming (3, 4). They would do well to remember that the world had perished once before by water (5, 6), and therefore that it was not impossible that it might be destroyed hereafter by fire (5—7). Whatever delay there might be was but the proof of the long-suffering of God, with whom a thousand years were as one day, giving men more time for repentance (8, 9). Sooner or later the end will come, but it will not be one of mere destruction, but will usher in the new heaven and the new

earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness (10—13). With this in view, men should seek for fitness for that new world. Their own teacher, Paul, whom the writer owns as a beloved brother, would tell them that the long-suffering of God was leading them to repentance (14, 15). If they found some things hard to be understood in his Epistles, they must remember this was the case also with the other Scriptures, which, like his writings, were liable to perversion (16). Lastly, the writer ends, as he began, by calling on his readers to grow in grace and knowledge.

CHAPTER VI.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE OF ST JUDE.

I. *The Writer.* The writer of the Epistle describes himself in a manner altogether exceptional in the Epistles of the New Testament. He is "the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ *and the brother of James.*" The use of the former term would be, as we find from St Paul's description of himself in Phil. i. 1 and St Peter's in 2 Pet. i. 1, compatible with his holding the position of an Apostle, but there is, to say the least, a *primâ facie* improbability in the thought that one who could claim attention on the higher ground of being an Apostle of Christ should claim it on the lower ground of being the "brother of James," whoever that James might be.

This antecedent probability may perhaps seem, at first, to be balanced by the fact that in our English version, a "Judas the brother of James" appears in the lists of the Twelve Apostles in Luke vi. 16 and Acts i. 13. It has, however, to be noted that the word "brother" is, as the italics shew, interpolated by the translators, and that the Greek combination would, according to the rule followed in all other cases, be naturally rendered as "Judas, the son of James" (Ἰούδας Ἰακώβου), the relationship of brotherhood being elsewhere indicated by the use of the proper word (ἀδελφός). It may safely be said that this would have been the rendering here, had not the translators been led by the impression made on them by the opening words

of this Epistle, and the desire to bring St Luke's list of the Twelve into harmony with them[1]. So far therefore the description "Judas the brother of James" is adverse to the view that we have before us the writing of an Apostle. There were, however, two bearing the names of Judas and James, or Jacobus, of whose relationship as brothers there is not the shadow of a doubt. "James and Joses and Judas and Simon" are named in Mark vi. 3 as the brethren of our Lord. The first-named, and therefore probably the eldest of the four, came into prominence in the history of the Apostolic Church, as in Gal. i. 19, and an almost uniform tradition identifies him with the James who presides in the council of Jerusalem in Acts xv. and who receives St Paul with much kindness in Acts xxi. 18—25. Assuming him to be in some sense the Lord's brother, it follows that Judas shared that distinction, and it has been shewn, it is believed, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that there is no adequate ground for identifying them with James the son of Alphæus, and Judas, the son (or brother ?) of James in the company of the Twelve.

It would scarcely be suitable, here, to re-open the discussion which the reader will find in the *Introduction to the Commentary on the Epistle of St James* in this series, as to the precise relationship of "the brethren of the Lord." It will be enough to state that of the three alternative hypotheses, (1) that the brethren were the children of Joseph and Mary, (2) that they were the children of the sister of the Virgin and of Clopas (assumed by some to be identical with Alphæus), and (3) that they were the children of Joseph by a former marriage, possibly of the levirate character, the last seems to commend itself as most probable in itself, best fitting in with all the *data* of the case, and best supported also by external testimony. On this view, Judas

[1] It may be well to note the fact, as this suggestion may seem to some readers a somewhat startling proposal, that it has the sanction of two, at least, of the earlier English versions. Tyndale (1534) and Cranmer (1539) both give "Judas, James' sonne." Wyclif and the Rhemish version simply reproduce the Greek, "Judas of James." The Geneva gives "Judas, James' *brother*." Luther, too, gives "Judas, Jakobi Sohn," and is followed by Bengel and Meyer.

must have been born some few years before B.C. 4, and, if we are right in assigning his Epistle to nearly the same date as those of St Peter, he must have been not far from seventy at the time of writing it. There is, perhaps, no writer in the New Testament of whose life and character we know so little. We can but picture to ourselves, as in the case of his brother James, the life of the home at Nazareth, the incredulous wonder with which they saw Him whom they had known for so many years in the daily intercourse of home-life, appear first in the character of a teacher, and then of a prophet, and then of the long-expected Christ. So it was that they sought to stay His work (Matt. xii. 46, Mark iii. 31—35, Luke viii. 19—21), and were yet in the position of those who believed not when they went up to the Feast of Tabernacles six months before the close of our Lord's Ministry (John vii. 5). They were, however, converted to a full acceptance of His claims between the Crucifixion and the Ascension; probably, we may believe, by His appearance to James after the Resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 7), or by their sharing in the manifestation which was made to five hundred brethren at once (1 Cor. xv. 6).

Beyond this we know absolutely nothing. Tradition is absolutely silent, and his name does not appear even in the legends of the Apocryphal Gospels. One conjecture may, however, be mentioned, as having at least some show of probability. The names of Joses and Judas appear in the history of the Apostolic Church on two memorable occasions. In the first, "Joses (or Joseph), who is called Barsabas" and distinguished by the further name of Justus, was put forward by the hundred and twenty brethren who were assembled after the Ascension as a candidate for the vacant Apostleship (Acts i. 23), and it seems not improbable, looking to the position subsequently occupied by James the brother of the Lord, that he also may have been one of the brethren, who was able to bear his witness of the fact of the Resurrection. If the name Barsabas were simply a patronymic, it would, of course, be fatal to this hypothesis. The analogy of Barnabas however (Acts iv. 36) makes it not unlikely that it may be an epithet descriptive of character. Of five possible

meanings, "son of conversion," "son of quiet," "son of an oath," "son of an old man," "son of wisdom," the elder Lightfoot (on Acts i. 23) gives the preference to the last. Accepting this, we have two noticeable points of agreement with James the brother of the Lord. Both are characterised by their love of wisdom, both are known as being conspicuously "just," or righteous. That St Luke should give the Latin and not the Greek form of that epithet suggests the inference that this character was recognised by Latin-speaking disciples, the "strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes," at Jerusalem (Acts ii. 10).

In the second instance, we have "Judas surnamed Barsabas" mentioned as a prophet, who was sent with Silas to Antioch as the bearer of the encyclical letter which conveyed the decree of the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem (Acts xv. 22, 32). He and his companion are described as "chief men" (*ἄνδρες ἡγούμενοι*)[1] among the brethren. After his visit to Antioch, where he and Silas exhorted the brethren with "many words," he returned to Jerusalem: we hear no more of him.

The hypothesis with which we are now dealing has at all events the merit of fitting in with these facts, and throwing light both on them and on the character of the Epistle. It explains the prominence of this Judas in the Church at Jerusalem, and the tone of authority in which he writes, and his selection by his brother James to be the bearer of the letter to the Church of Antioch. It gives a more definite application to St Peter's reference to the commandment of the prophets and Apostles (2 Pet. iii. 2) and explains his own reference to Apostles only and not to prophets (Jude, verse 17). If we were to assume that he was with St Peter at the time when the Second Epistle was written, it would explain the use of the exceptional form of Symeon as in the speech of James in Acts xv. 14.

[1] The description is, I think, fatal to the view, which the elder Lightfoot and some others have adopted, that Joses and Judas Barsabas were sons of Alphæus, and that the latter was therefore an Apostle. The assumption of one writer that Sabas was a contracted form of Zebedæus, and that they were therefore brothers of the Apostles James and John, scarcely calls for more than a passing mention.

The silence which rests over the name of Judas, the writer of the Epistle, is, however, in itself significant. It indicates a life passed in comparative quiescence, like that of his brother, the Bishop of Jerusalem. The story told by Hegesippus (Euseb. *H. E.* III. 18) that the grandchildren of Judas who "after the flesh was called the brother of the Lord" were sought out by the *delatores* or informers, under Domitian, and brought before the Emperor, who was disturbed by fear of the "coming" of the Christ, and were dismissed by him when they shewed him their hands hardened with labour and told him the tale of their inheritance of poverty, indicates a humble, but not an ascetic life, and agrees with the statement of St Paul that the brethren of the Lord were married (1 Cor. ix. 5). Reading between the lines of the Epistle, we can trace something of the character of the man. We miss the serene calmness which distinguishes the teaching of his brother, but its absence is adequately explained by the later date of the Epistle, by the presence of new dangers, by the burning indignation roused by the sensual impurities of the false teachers with whom he had to do. What strikes us most, in some sense, as an unexpected difficulty, is the reference to narratives and prophecies which we find nowhere in the Canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament and which are found in spurious and unauthentic Apocrypha. Had he read, we ask, the *Book of Enoch*, and the *Assumption of Moses*, or some similar book? (See notes on Jude verses 9 and 14.) It can scarcely be doubted that, but for antecedent prepossessions in favour of an arbitrary *à priori* theory of inspiration, we should answer this question in the affirmative. We can scarcely think it probable that he and his fellow-workers read no books but those included in the Hebrew Canon of the Old Testament. The Epistle of St James shews, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that he was familiar with the *Wisdom of Solomon*, and the *Ecclesiasticus* of the Son of Sirach. (See *Introduction to St James*, p. 33.) St Paul, in mentioning Jannes and Jambres (2 Tim. iii. 8), clearly refers to some other history of Moses than that which we find in the Pentateuch. And if we once admit the possibility of an acquaintance with the then current literature

of Palestine, we know that such books as those referred to may well have been within his reach, and, if so, it was not strange that he should use them, without critically examining their historical trustworthiness, as furnishing illustrations that gave point and force to his counsels. The false teachers against whom he wrote were, we know, characterised largely by their fondness for "Jewish fables" (Tit. i. 14), and the allusive references to books with which they were familiar were therefore of the nature of an *argumentum ad hominem*. He fought them, as it were, with their own weapons.

II. *Relation of the Epistle of St Jude to the Second Epistle of St Peter.*

The parallelism between 2 Pet. ii. and the Epistle of St Jude lies on the surface. There is sufficient resemblance to make it certain that one writer knew the work of the other, sufficient difference to shew that he exercised a certain measure of independence in dealing with the materials thus placed within his reach. The following considerations lead, it is believed, to the inference that St Jude's Epistle was the earlier of the two.

(1) It was more likely that St Peter should incorporate the contents of a short Epistle like that of St Jude, in the longer one which he was writing, than that St Jude, with the whole of St Peter's Second Epistle before him, should have confined himself to one section of it only.

(2) It was more probable that St Peter, in reproducing St Jude, should, as stated above, have thought it expedient to omit this or that passage which might seem to him likely to take their place among things "hard to be understood" or prove stumbling-blocks to the weak, than that Jude should have added these elements to what he found written by St Peter.

What has been suggested above (p. 80) seems the probable explanation of the likeness between the two Epistles. That of Jude was brought to St Peter, was, perhaps, placed in his hands by the writer himself. It brought before him a new form of

evil; and he did not hesitate, using possibly St Jude's help as an amanuensis, to write to those of the dispersion whom Jude also had addressed. It seems, on the whole, probable from the absence of any mention of individual Churches, that the Epistle of the latter was addressed, like that of his brother, to the whole body of "the twelve tribes that were scattered abroad" (James i. 1).

III. *History of the Epistle of St Jude.*

What has been said of the Second Epistle of St Peter holds good, with one remarkable exception, of the Epistle of St Jude. It is not mentioned or quoted by any of the Apostolic Fathers, Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, nor in the Epistle of Barnabas nor the "Shepherd" of Hermas, nor in Irenæus, nor the fragments of Papias. Clement of Alexandria is the first Father who quotes and names it (*Paedag.* III. 8, *Strom.* III. 2). He is followed by Origen, who in his Commentary on Matt. xiii. 55, 56, speaks of Jude as having written an Epistle "of but few verses yet full of mighty words of heavenly wisdom," and quotes it elsewhere, though in one passage with a doubt as to its reception (*Comm. on Matt.* xxii. 23). Tertullian (circ. A.D. 210) quotes it (*de Hab. Mul.* I. 3) as the work of an Apostle. It is wanting in the Peschito, or Syriac Version (a sufficient indication, as has been remarked[1], of its not being by the Apostle Judas, who, under the name of Thaddeus, was the traditional Evangelist of Edessa); and when we come to the fourth century, Eusebius (*H. E.* III. 25) places it among the *Antilegomena* or disputed books, and Jerome mentions (*Cat. Script. Eccles.*) that although then received, it had been rejected by many on account of its quoting the Apocryphal Book of Enoch.

The singular exception above referred to is that of the Muratorian Fragment (circ. A.D. 170), which, though omitting all mention of the Epistles of St James and St Peter, distinctly recognises that of St Jude. No satisfactory explanation has as

[1] Canon Venables in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. *Jude, Epistle of.*

yet been given of the omission of the former, but the very absence of any mention of them renders the fact of the latter being named a more decisive proof that the Epistle now before us was recognised as Canonical in the middle of the second century.

ANALYSIS OF THE EPISTLE OF ST JUDE.

The writer addresses himself at large to all who were consecrated and called as God's people (1, 2). He states that he had been moved to write to them, urging them to contend for the faith, by the dangers of the time (3). Ungodly men are turning the grace of God into lasciviousness (4). Believers should therefore remember that no privileges, however great, exempt them from the danger of falling, as the Israelites fell after leaving Egypt, as the angels and the cities of the Plain had fallen (5—7). The sins of the false teachers were like theirs and worse, as sins against nature, sins after the pattern of those of Cain, and Balaam, and Korah (8—11). They mingled in the Agapae with impure purposes: all images of natural disorder, rainless clouds, withering trees, wandering stars, were realised in their lives (12, 13). Truly had Enoch prophesied that the Lord would come to judge such as these, murmurers, self-willed, and covetous (14, 15). From that picture of evil the writer turns to warn his readers against another hardly less threatening danger from the mockers of the last days, sensual and schismatic (17—19). In contrast with both these classes, they were to build themselves up in faith and prayer and love (20—22). They must not shrink from rebuking those that needed rebuke, but they must deal with each case on its own merits, with greater or less severity (22, 23). The writer ends with an ascription of praise to God as their protector and preserver from all the dangers that threatened them.

THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF PETER.

PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scat- 1
tered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia,

Title.—The title given in most of the Uncial MSS. is simply like the short English form, 1 Peter. Some of the Cursive, or later, MSS., give the variations, "The first Catholic (or general) Epistle of Peter," and "The Catholic Epistle of the Holy and Venerable (*pan-euphemos*) Apostle Peter."

1. *Peter*] We note that the new name which his Lord had given him has replaced, in his own mind as in that of others, that of Simon Bar-jona (Matt. xvi. 17), by which he had once been known. So, in like manner, Paul takes the name of Saul, in the letters of that Apostle. Like him also, he describes himself as the "Apostle," the envoy or representative, of Christ.

to the strangers scattered...] Literally, taking the words in their Greek order, **to the elect sojourners of the dispersion.** The last word occurs in the New Testament in John vii. 35 and Jas. i. 1, and in the Apocrypha in 2 Macc. i. 27. It was used as a collective term for the whole aggregate of Jews who, since the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, had been scattered in Asia and elsewhere. It follows from this that the Apostle, true to his character, as sent to the circumcision (Gal. ii. 7), addresses himself mainly, if not exclusively, to the Jewish Christians of the regions which he names, but the term would naturally include also the proselytes to Judaism, and so accounts for some of the phrases in the Epistle which seem to imply that some of its readers had had a Gentile origin. The term "sojourners" is translated "pilgrims" in chap. ii. 11 and Heb. xi. 13. Its exact meaning is that of "dwellers in a strange land."

Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia] The order of the names is, on the whole, that which would present itself to the mind of a man writing, as St Peter does, from the East (chap. v. 13). The existence of Christian communities in the five provinces witnesses to the extent of unrecorded mission-work in the Apostolic age. The foundation of the Churches in Galatia and Asia is, of course, traceable to St Paul (Acts xvi. 6, xix. 10); those in Pontus may possibly have been due to the labours of Aquila, who was a native of that region (Acts xviii. 2). Bithynia had once been contemplated by St Paul as a field for his

2 and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedi-

labours (Acts xvi. 7), but we do not read of his actually working either there or in Cappadocia. See *Introduction* as to the history of the Churches thus named.

2. *elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father*] The word "elect" or **chosen** belongs, as already stated, to verse 1, but the English sufficiently represents the meaning of the Greek. The word and the thought that the disciples of Christ are what they are by the election or choice of God, characterises the whole teaching of the New Testament. Here there is the personal interest of noting that the word is prominent in the Gospel of St Mark, which we have seen reason to connect closely with St Peter's influence, and in that portion of our Lord's discourses recorded in it (Mark xiii. 20, 22, 27), to which the wars and tumults of Palestine must at this time have been drawing attention. Comp. also the prominence of the thought and of the verbs for "choosing" in John xiii. 18, xv. 16, 19. The "elect" had, like the "saints" (Acts ix. 13), become almost a synonyme for Christians (2 Tim. ii. 10; Tit. i. 1). And this choice is referred to the "foreknowledge" of God. The word hovers between the meaning of a mere prevision of the future, and the higher sense in which "knowing" means "loving" and "approving," as in 1 Cor. viii. 3, Gal. iv. 9, and probably Rom. viii. 29, xi. 2. The noun occurs in the New Testament only here and in St Peter's speech in Acts ii. 23, and is so far evidence of continuity of character and thought. In what way the thought of man's freedom to will was reconcileable with that of God's electing purpose the writers of the New Testament did not care to discuss. They felt, we may believe, instinctively, half unconsciously, that the problem was insoluble, and were content to accept the two beliefs, which cannot logically be reconciled. In the words "the foreknowledge of God *the Father*," we find, perhaps, the secret of their acceptance of this aspect of the Divine Government. The choice and the knowledge were not those of an arbitrary sovereign will, capricious as are the sovereigns of earth, in its favours and antipathies, seeking only to manifest its power, but of a Father whose tender mercies were over all His works, and who sought to manifest His love to all His children. From that stand-point the "choice" of some to special blessings was compatible with perfect equity to all. It should be noticed that in Rom. viii. 29 we have "foreknowledge" as a step in the Divine order prior to predestination, but it may well be questioned whether either Apostle had present to his thoughts the logical solution presented by the Arminian theory, that God, foreseeing the characters of men as they would have been, if not predestined, then predestined them accordingly. On that theory the question may well be asked, What made them such as God thus foreknew? The difficulty is but thrown further back, and it is wiser to accept the conclusion that the problem is insoluble, and that the language of Scripture issues in the antinomy of apparently contradictory propositions.

ence and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 3

through sanctification of the Spirit] The word for "sanctification," for which, perhaps, **consecration** would be a better equivalent, is used eight times by St Paul, once in the Epistle to the Hebrews (xii. 14), here, and not elsewhere in the New Testament. Grammatically the words admit of the interpretation which sees in them the sanctification of the human spirit (genitive of the object), but the juxtaposition of the word Spirit with that of the Father and with Christ, is decisive in favour of the explanation which sees in the construction the genitive of the subject, or of the agent, and finds in the **sanctification wrought by the Spirit** the region in which the foreknowledge of God finds its completion.

unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ] The clause is co-ordinate with that which precedes it, pointing to the end of the election as that points to the sphere in which it worked and the means by which it was to be accomplished. In "obedience" we have the active human side of the result, in the "sprinkling" the Divine side of pardon and acceptance. The word for "sprinkling" is found elsewhere only in Heb. xii. 24, where, as in this place, it refers definitely to the narrative of Exod. xxiv. 8. Moses had sprinkled Israel according to the flesh with the blood of oxen, as being "the blood of the covenant," that by contact with which they were brought within the covenant of which he was the mediator (Gal. iii. 19). In like manner, in St Peter's words, believers in Christ are brought within the new covenant by the mystical, spiritual sprinkling on their souls and spirits of the blood of Jesus, and for that sprinkling God had chosen them with a purpose supremely wise to which no time-limits could be assigned. The same thought, it may be noted, is expressed in St John's words, that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied] The combination of "grace" and "peace" may be noted as a probable instance of St Peter's adopting the very phraseology of St Paul, as he found it in the letters with which 2 Pet. iii. 16 (assuming the genuineness of that Epistle) shews him to have been acquainted. In "peace" we have the old Hebrew formula of salutation (Matt. x. 12, 13): in "grace" (χάρις) probably the substitution of the more definite Christian thought for the "joy" or "greeting" (χαίρειν) which, as in Acts xv. 23, James i. 1, was the customary opening formula of Greek epistles. The addition of "be multiplied" is peculiar to the two Epistles of St Peter (2 Pet. i. 2), and to the Epistle of St Jude (verse 2), which presents so many points of contact with the second of those two.

3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*] Here again we note the close correspondence with the opening words of two of St Paul's Epistles (2 Cor. i. 3, Eph. i. 3). It is, of course, possible that both have adopted what was a common inheritance from Jewish devout feeling, modified by the new faith in Christ; but looking to the

which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ
4 from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

reproduction of Pauline phrases in other instances, the idea of derivation seems on the whole the most probable.

which according to his abundant mercy] Literally, as in the margin, "his **much** or **great** mercy." The thought, though here not the phraseology, is identical with St Paul's "being rich in mercy" (Eph. ii. 4). In the prominence thus given to the "mercy" of God, as shewn in His redeeming and sanctifying work, we recognise the conviction that those who were the objects of His favour were at once wretched, and unworthy of it through their guilt, and that His pity for that wretchedness was the source of the "grace" or "favour" which He had thus shewn to them.

hath begotten us again unto a lively hope] Better perhaps "a living hope," a hope not destined, as human hopes proverbially were, to be frail and perishable, but having in it the elements of a perennial life. And this was brought about by God's regenerating work on and in the soul. The word which St Peter uses is peculiar to him among the writers of the New Testament, and meets us again in verse 23. The thought, however, is common to him with St James ("of His own will begat He us," i. 18), with St Paul ("the washing of regeneration," Tit. iii. 5), and with our Lord's teaching ("except a man be born again") as recorded by St John (John iii. 5). It is noticeable that St Peter, who elsewhere (chap. iii. 21) lays so much stress on baptism, does not here refer to it as the instrument of the new birth, but goes further back to the Resurrection of Christ as that without which baptism and faith would have been alike ineffectual. In this also his teaching is substantially at one with St Paul's, who sees in baptism that in which we are at once "buried with Christ," and raised by and with Him to "newness of life" (Rom. vi. 3, 4).

4. *to an inheritance incorruptible*] The clause is co-ordinate with the preceding and depends upon the word "begotten." The idea of the "inheritance" is again essentially Pauline (Acts xx. 32, Gal. iii. 18, Eph. i. 14, 18 and elsewhere). The epithets attached to the word distinguish it from any earthly inheritance, such as had been given to Israel (Acts vii. 5), and agree with the "everlasting inheritance" of Heb. ix. 15. Here it answers to the completed "salvation" of the next verse, of which we get glimpses and foretastes here, but which is reserved in its fulness in and for the region of the eternal. In that inheritance there is nothing that mars, nothing that defiles (Rev. xxi. 27), nothing that fades away, as the flower of the field fadeth (James i. 10, 11). The two latter adjectives (*amiantos*, *amarantos*) have in the Greek an impressive assonance which cannot be reproduced in English.

for you] Some MSS. give "for us," but this was probably a correction due to the use of the first person in the preceding verse, and the present text, which rests on the authority of the best MSS., is like St

who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salva- 5
tion ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye 6
greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are
in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial 7

Paul's changes from the first person to the second (as in Rom. vii. 4, 5, Eph. ii. 13, 14), the natural expression of the feeling of the Apostle that what he hopes and believes for himself, he hopes and believes also for those to whom he writes.

5. *who are kept by the power of God through faith*] In the word for "kept," we have, as in 2 Cor. xi. 32 in its literal, and Phil. iv. 7 in its figurative sense, the idea of being "guarded" as men are guarded in a camp or citadel. Of that guarding we have (1) the objective aspect, the "power of God" being as the force that encompasses and protects us, and (2) the subjective faith, as that through which, as in the vision of Elisha's servant (2 Kings vi. 16), we feel that we are guarded, and see that "those that are with us are more than they that be against us."

unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time] It is clear that the word "salvation" is used here, with its highest possible connotation, as including not only present pardon and peace, but also, as in Rom. xiii. 11, 1 Thess. v. 8, the full consummation of blessedness. In this sense it is identical with the "manifestation of the sons of God" of Rom. viii. 19, the "glory which shall be revealed."

6. *Wherein ye greatly rejoice*] The English verb and adverb answer to the single Greek word which expresses, as in Matt. v. 12, Luke i. 47, x. 21, the act of an exulting joy. The verb occurs three times in this Epistle, not at all in St Paul's, and may fairly be regarded as an echo from our Lord's use of it as recorded above in the Sermon on the Mount.

though now for a season, if need be] Literally, **for a little**, but as the words almost certainly refer to the duration, not to the degree, of the sufferings spoken of, the English version (or **for a little while**) may be accepted as correct. In the "if need be" we have an implied belief that the sufferings were not fortuitous, nor sent without a purpose. They had their necessary place in the process by which God was working out the sanctification of His children.

ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations] The sense of the Greek participle would, perhaps, be better expressed by **ye were grieved**, or, **made sorry.** He writes of what he had heard as to their sufferings. He does not actually know that they are still continuing. In the "manifold temptations" we note the use of the same phrase as in James i. 2, with which St Peter could hardly fail to have been acquainted. Here, as there and in Acts xx. 19, the "temptations" are chiefly those which come to men from without, persecutions, troubles, what we call the "trials" of life.

7. *that the trial of your faith*] The use of the self-same phrase as in James i. 3 strengthens the conclusion suggested in the previous note as to St Peter's knowledge of this Epistle. **Test**, perhaps even **proof** or **probation**, would better express the force of the Greek word. Faith is not known to be what it is until it is tested by suffering.

of your faith, *being* much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus
8 Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy
9 unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your

being much more precious than of gold that perisheth] The words suggest at once a natural similitude and point out its incompleteness. That "gold is tried and purified by fire" was a familiar analogy, as in Prov. xvii. 3, xxvii. 21, Ecclus. ii. 5, 1 Cor. iii. 13, but the gold so purified belongs still to the category of perishable things, while the faith which is purified by suffering takes its place among those that are imperishable.

might be found unto praise and honour and glory] The words stand somewhat vaguely in the Greek as in the English, and might possibly express that what men suffer is for God's glory. The context, however, and the parallelism of Rom. ii. 7, make it certain that they refer to the "praise" [found here only in conjunction with the familiar combination (Rom. ii. 7, 10, 1 Tim. i. 17) of "honour and glory"] which men shall receive (comp. 1 Cor. iv. 5), when sufferings rightly borne have done their work, in and at the revelation of Jesus Christ in His Second Coming as the Judge of all men.

8. *whom having not seen, ye love*] Some of the better MSS. give **whom not knowing ye love,** but the reading adopted in the English version rests on sufficient authority and gives a better meaning. The Apostle, in writing the words, could hardly intend to contrast, however real the contrast might be, his own condition as one who had seen with that of these distant disciples. Did there float in his mind the recollection of the words "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed" (John xx. 29)? In any case he emphasizes the fact that their love for Christ does not depend, as human love almost invariably does, upon outward personal acquaintance. He too, like St Paul, has learnt to know Christ no more after the flesh (2 Cor. v. 16). The next clause, which seems at first almost a tame repetition of the same thought, really points to a new characteristic paradox in the spiritual life. The exulting joy of human affection manifests itself when the lover looks on the face of his beloved (Song of Sol. ii. 14). Here that joy is represented as found in its fulness where the Presence is visible not to the eye of the body, but only to that of faith. Like all deeper emotions it is too deep for words—"unspeakable," as were the words which St Paul heard in his vision of Paradise (2 Cor. xii. 4), as were the groanings of the Spirit making intercession for and with our spirits (Rom. viii. 26), and it was "full of glory" (literally, **glorified**) already, in its foretaste of the future, transfigured beyond the brightness of any earthly bliss.

9. *receiving the end of your faith*] The question has been raised whether these words refer to the present or the future. It has been urged on the one hand that the word for "receiving" applied in 2 Cor.

faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls. Of which salvation 10
the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who

v. 10, and perhaps in Heb. x. 36, Eph. vi. 8, to the ultimate issue of God's judgment, excludes the former. On the other hand, it may be replied that it is arbitrary to limit the last two passages to the final judgment, and that the tense both of "rejoice" and "receiving" is definitely present. On the whole therefore there is no adequate reason against taking the words in their natural and obvious meaning. Those to whom the Apostle wrote were thought of as already receiving, very really, though not, it might be, in its ultimate fulness, that which was the "end" or "goal" of their faith, and that goal was found in the "salvation" of their "souls"—the deliverance of their moral being (in this instance the word includes "spirit," though elsewhere it is distinguished from it) from the burden of guilt, the sense of condemnation, the misery and discord of alienation from God.

10. *Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently*] The words require a slight correction before we proceed to explain them. The noun "prophets" is without the article and the verbs are in the aorist and not the perfect. We translate accordingly, **of which salvation prophets enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied.** The words have commonly been taken as referring exclusively to the Old Testament prophets, and it is at least right to set before the reader the interpretation of the passage in detail based upon that assumption. Those prophets, it is said, saw the future sufferings of Christ and the after glory but not the time of their accomplishment. The Spirit which taught them was, though they knew it not, the Spirit of Christ, one with that which proceeds from Him and which He bestows on His people. The **sufferings appointed for Christ** (this, rather than "sufferings *of* Christ," is the true rendering) were such as those indicated prophetically in Isaiah liii., typically in Ps. xxii. The glories were those of His Eternal Kingdom. It was revealed to the prophets that they **were ministering** these things (the verb is in the tense that implies continuous action) not for themselves (comp. the parallel language of Heb. xi. 13, 39) but for "you" (some MSS. giving "us"), i.e. for the whole body of future believers in Christ. And these things, the sufferings of Christ and the glories of the future kingdom, were now, St Peter adds, "reported" by the preachers of the Gospel, those preachers being themselves also inspired by the Holy Ghost sent down, as on the day of Pentecost, to fit them for their work; the Gospel which was so preached including, on the one hand, the sufferings of Christ, as they are recorded in the written Gospels, and embodying all that had been revealed to the writers, of the future glory. And these things, he adds, "angels (the word is again without the article, as emphasizing the contrast between them as a class and prophets as a class) 'desire to look into,' yet do not see them with the clearness with which the true believer in Christ contemplates them."

Having thus stated with, it is believed, adequate fulness what may be called the received interpretation of the words, it remains to give

11 prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the

that which seems, on the whole, to be truer to the meaning of the words, and which presents a solution of phenomena which the other leaves unsolved. The basis of this other explanation lies in the belief that St Peter is speaking mainly, though perhaps not exclusively, of the prophets of the Apostolic Church. The position of those prophets was, we must remember, as prominent as that of the Apostles (Eph. ii. 20, iii. 5, iv. 11; 2 Pet. iii. 2). Among those with whom St Peter had been brought into personal contact were Barnabas, the "son of consolation," or, as the Hebrew might be interpreted, the "son of prophecy" (Acts iv. 36), Agabus (Acts xi. 28, xxi. 10), Judas, and Silas or Silvanus (Acts xv. 32). In 2 Pet. i. 19 we have sufficient proof of the importance attached to the "prophetic word" as a light giving guidance amidst the darkness and perplexities of the time. In 2 Pet. iii. 1—13 we see that they spoke of the glories of the new heaven and the new earth after a time of darkness and distress. In 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10 we read how the things which "eye had not seen nor ear heard" had been revealed to prophets by the Spirit, and in Rom. xvi. 25, 26, in like manner, that "the mystery which had been kept secret since the world began was now made manifest in prophetic writings," just as in Eph. iii. 5 St Paul speaks of the same mystery as now "revealed unto the Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit." All this is enough, it is believed, to warrant, if only at first, tentatively, the assumption that the prophets of the New Testament are those of whom St Peter speaks. It will be seen how far the detailed examination of what follows falls in with the hypothesis.

11. *searching what, or what manner of time*] The two words have each a distinct force, the first indicating the wish of men to fix the date of the coming of the Lord absolutely, the second to determine the note or character of the season of its approach. Of that craving we find examples in the question "wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" which was met by our Lord with the answer "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons" (Acts i. 6, 7), in the over-heated expectations which St Paul checks in 2 Thess. ii. 1—12, in the hopes that were met by the mocking scorn which St Peter himself rebukes in 2 Pet. iii. 3—8.

the Spirit of Christ which was in them] It will hardly be questioned that the name thus given to the Spirit, as compared with Rom. viii. 9 and Gal. iv. 6, primarily suggests the thought of prophets who were living and working in the Christian Church rather than of those of the older Church of Israel.

when it testified beforehand the sufferings] To the English readers these words naturally seem decisive in favour of the current interpretation, and against that which is here suggested. But they seem so only because they are a mistranslation of the original. When St Peter wishes to speak of the "sufferings *of* Christ," he uses a different construction (chap. iv. 13, v. 1), as St Paul does (2 Cor. i. 5). Here

sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto 12
whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent *down* from heaven; which *things the* angels desire to look into.

the phrase, as has been noticed above, is different. St Peter speaks of **the sufferings (which pass on) unto Christ.** The thought is identical with that of St Paul's, expressed in terms so analogous that it is a marvel that their bearing on this passage should have escaped the notice of commentators. "As the sufferings of Christ abound toward us," St Paul says (2 Cor. i. 5), "so also does our consolation." He thinks of the communion between Christ and His people as involving their participation in His sufferings. Is it not obvious that St Peter presents in almost identical phraseology the converse of that thought, and that the "sufferings" spoken of are those which the disciples were enduring for Christ, and which he thinks of as shared by Him, flowing over to Him? That predictions of such sufferings, sometimes general, sometimes personal, entered largely into the teaching of the prophets of the New Testament we see from Acts xi. 28, xx. 23, xxi. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 3, 12. That they dwelt also upon the "glories" that should come after the sufferings lies almost in the very nature of the case. Visions of Paradise and the third heaven, as in 2 Cor. xii. 1—5, of the throne and the rainbow and the sea of glass, and the heavenly Jerusalem, like those of St John, were, we may well believe, as indeed 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10 sufficiently indicates, almost the common heritage of the prophets of the Apostolic Church.

12. *Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us*] The better MSS. give "you" instead of "us," obviously with a better sense and in closer agreement with the "you" of the following clause. What is meant, still keeping to the line of interpretation here adopted, is that the prophets who had these previsions, at once of the coming sufferings and coming glories of the Church, had not carried on their ministering work for themselves, bounded, i.e., as by local and personal interests, but with a view to those even of the most distant members of the great family of God. The vision of the heavenly Jerusalem was for the dwellers in Pontus and Asia, in Rome or Corinth, as much as for those who lived within the walls of the earthly city.

which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel] The Greek verbs are in the aorist, and therefore point to something in the past, but English idiom hardly allows us to combine present and past by saying "which now were reported." Here, it is believed, St Peter speaks of St Luke, St Paul, and the other labourers by whom the provinces of Asia Minor had been evangelised. They too, he recognises, were as fully inspired as the prophets of whom he had just spoken.

which things the angels desire to look into] Better, **angels,** without

13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober,
and hope to the end for the grace that is *to be* brought unto
14 you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children,
not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in

the article. See note on verse 10. The word for "look" is the same as that used by St James (i. 25), and implies, as in Luke xxiv. 12, John xx. 5, 11, the earnest gaze of one who bends over a given object and scrutinizes it thoroughly. The words fit in, perhaps, with either of the two interpretations, but considering the part assigned to angels in the records of the Gospels, in connexion alike with the Nativity (Matt. ii. 13, 19; Luke i. 11, 26, ii. 9—15), the Passion (Luke xxii. 43), the Resurrection (Matt. xxviii. 2; Mark xvi. 5; Luke xxiv. 4; John xx. 12) and the Ascension (Acts i. 10, 11), it is more natural to refer them to sufferings and glories that were still future than to those of which they had already been spectators.

13. *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind*] The words were in any case a natural figure for prompt readiness for activity, but, coming from one who had been a personal disciple of the Lord Jesus, we cannot fail to trace in them an echo of His words as recorded in Luke xii. 35, possibly also, looking to the many instances of parallelism with St Paul's Epistles, of those which we find in Eph. vi. 14. The sequence of thought is that the prospect of the coming glories should be a motive to unflagging activity during men's sojourn upon earth.

be sober, and hope to the end] The verb for "be sober" expresses a sobriety of the Nazarite type. It meets us in 1 Thess. v. 6, 8, and in this Epistle, chaps. iv. 7, v. 8. The marginal reading **perfectly**, as though he said "hope with a hope that lacks nothing of completeness," answers better to the meaning of the adverb than the phrase in the English Version.

the grace that is to be brought unto you] Literally, as the Greek participle is in the present tense and has no gerundial force, **the grace which is being brought unto you.** The communication is thought of as continuous, and finding its sphere of action in every successive revelation of Jesus Christ from that of the soul's first consciousness of His presence, as in Gal. i. 16, through those which accompany the stages of spiritual growth, as in 2 Cor. xii. 1, to that of the final Advent. The use of the phrase in verse 7 gives, perhaps, a somewhat emphatic prominence to the last thought.

14. *as obedient children*] Literally, **children of obedience.** The phrase is more or less a Hebraism, like "children of wrath," Eph. ii. 3, or the more closely parallel "children of disobedience" in Eph. v. 6. The "cursed children," literally, **children of a curse,** of 2 Pet. ii. 14, furnishes another example of the Hebrew feeling which looks on the relation of sonship as a parable symbolizing the inheritance of character or status.

not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts] The word is the same as that used by St Paul in Rom. xii. 2, where the English Version gives "conformed." The words "in your ignorance" are

your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, 15
so be ye holy in all *manner of* conversation; because it 16
is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call 17
on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth ac-

in the Greek more closely connected with "lusts," **the former lusts that were in your ignorance.** We trace an echo of the feeling expressed by St Peter in Acts iii. 17, and again by St Paul in Acts xvii. 30, that the whole life of men, whether Jews or Gentiles, before the revelation of Christ, was a time of ignorance, to be judged as such. The former was at least likely to remember, as he wrote, his Master's words as to "the servant who knew not his lord's will" (Luke xii. 48), and who was therefore to be "beaten with few stripes." It does not follow, as some have thought, that he is thinking here, chiefly or exclusively, of those who had been heathens. The words were in their breadth and fulness as true of Jew and Gentile alike as were St Paul's in Rom. xi. 32.

15. *be ye holy in all manner of conversation*] Better, **in every form of conduct.** The word "conversation," once used in its true meaning (*conversari*=living, moving to and fro, with others), has during the last hundred and fifty years settled down almost irrecoverably into a synonym for "talking." Swift is, I believe, the first writer in whom the later meaning takes the place of the earlier. In Cowper's poem "Conversation" it is used without even a reminiscence of the fuller significance of the word. For its use in the Authorized Version, see Pss. xxxvii. 14, l. 23; 2 Cor. i. 12; Gal. i. 13, and many other passages. In the reference to the holiness of God as calling us to reproduce, in our measure, that holiness in our own lives, we have an echo of the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 48). The Greek of the previous clause has a force which the English but imperfectly represents. More literally we might say **after the pattern of the Holy One who called you.**

16. *because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy*] Literally, **ye shall be holy,** the future, as in the Ten Commandments, having the force of the imperative. The words, which occur frequently in the Levitical code (Lev. xi. 44, xix. 2, xx. 26), were applied sometimes to the priests as such, sometimes to the whole nation as a kingdom of priests. We see from ch. ii. 5, that the Apostle's thought is that all members of the Church of Christ have succeeded to that character, and are sharers in the priestly function, offering spiritual sacrifices.

17. *And if ye call on the Father...*] Better, as the Greek noun has no article, **if ye call upon a Father,** i.e. if you worship not an arbitrary Judge, but one of whom Fatherhood is the essential character. The sequel shews that this attribute of Fatherhood is not thought of as excluding the idea of judgment, but gives assurance that the judgment will be one of perfect equity.

who without respect of persons] We note the prominence of this thought, derived originally from the impression by our Lord's words and acts (Matt. xxii. 16), as presenting a coincidence (*1*) with the

cording to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourn-
13 ing *here* in fear: forasmuch as ye know that ye were not
redeemed with corruptible *things*, *as* silver and gold, from
your vain conversation received by tradition from your fa-
19 thers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb

Apostle's own words in Acts x. 34; and (2) as in other instances, with the teaching of St James (ii. 1—4).

pass the time of your sojourning here in fear] The verb for "pass" is that from which is derived the noun for "conversation" or "conduct." The connexion of thought may be indicated, in the English as in the Greek, by rendering **conduct yourselves during the time of your sojourning.** The latter word connects itself with the "strangers" of verse 1, and yet more with the "strangers and sojourners" of ch. ii. 11. The "fear" which is urged upon them, is not the terror of slaves, but the reverential awe of sons, even the true fear of the Lord which is "the beginning of wisdom." (Ps. cxi. 10; Prov. i. 7.) Comp. also Luke xii. 4, 5.

18. *as ye know that ye were not redeemed...*] The idea of a ransom, as a price paid for liberation from captivity or death, suggests the contrast between the silver and gold which were paid commonly for human ransoms, and the price which Christ had paid. In the word itself we have an echo of our Lord's teaching in Matt. xx. 28, Mark x. 45. In this instance, it will be noted, stress is laid on the fact that the liberation effected by the ransom is not from the penalty of an evil life, but from the evil life itself.

from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers] Better, as before, **vain conduct.** It has been somewhat rashly inferred from these words that the Apostle is speaking mainly, if not exclusively, of the converts from heathenism who were to be found in the Asiatic Churches. His own words, however, in Acts xv. 10, yet more the condemnation passed by our Lord on the traditions of the elders (Matt. xv. 2—6, Mark vii. 3—13), and St Paul's reference to his living after the traditions of the fathers (Gal. i. 14), are surely enough to warrant the conclusion that he is speaking here of the degenerate Judaism of those whom he addresses, rather than turning to a different class of readers, or, at the least, that his words include the former.

19. *but with the precious blood of Christ*] The order of the Greek, and the absence of the article before "blood," somewhat modify the meaning. Better, **with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,** [even that] **of Christ.** That blood, the life which it represented, poured out upon the cross, took its place among the things that were not corruptible, and is contrasted accordingly with the "silver" and the "gold." With the exception of the substitution of the "blood which is the life" for the life itself, the thought is identical with that of the two passages (Matt. xx. 28, Mark x. 45) already referred to. The minds of the disciples had been directed to the "blood" thus understood, as connected with

without blemish and without spot: who verily was fore- 20
ordained before the foundation of the world, but was mani-
fest in *these* last times for you, who by him do believe in 21
God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him

remission of sins, in what we know as the words of institution at the Last Supper (Matt. xxvi. 28, Mark xiv. 24, Luke xxii. 20). In the blood being that of a "lamb," we trace the impression made on the mind of the Apostle by the words which the Baptist had spoken in the hearing of St John (John i. 29), and which are reproduced with so much vividness in the Apocalypse (Rev. v. 6, 12). The question meets us, and is not easy to answer, To what special sacrifice ordained in the law of Moses do they refer? The epithet "without blemish" seems to point to the Paschal lamb (Exod. xii. 5), but neither of the adjectives which St Peter uses is found in the LXX. version in connexion with the Passover. As connected with the deliverance of Israel both from the angel of death and from their bondage in Egypt, the blood so shed might well come to be thought of as the instrument of redemption. Had a lamb been sacrificed on the day of Atonement, that would have seemed the natural type of the death of Christ, but there the victim was a goat (Lev. xvi. 7); the daily morning and evening sacrifice of a lamb (Exod. xxix. 38) fails as being unconnected with any special act of redeeming love. On the whole, perhaps, it is best to think of the comparison, suggested originally by the Baptist's words, as pointing to the fact that whatever typical significance had attached to the lamb in any part of the complex ritual of the law had now been realised in Christ.

20. *who verily was foreordained*] Literally, **foreknown**, but the foreknowledge of God implies the foreordaining. Here also we note the coincidence with St Peter's language in Acts ii. 23, iii. 18. The Greek for "these last times" is literally **the end of the times.** The Apostle's language was determined probably in part by the prophecy of Joel which he cites in Acts ii. 17, in part by his belief that with the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, the last period of God's dealings with mankind, the duration of which it was not given to him to measure, had actually begun. In the thought that the foreknowledge of God was "before the foundation of the world," we have the very phrase which St Peter had heard from our Lord's lips in Matt. xxv. 34, Luke xi. 50, John xvii. 24, and which he may have read with the same force as in this passage in Eph. i. 4.

21. *who by him do believe in God...*] Literally, **who through him are faithful** (or **believing**) **towards God**; the adjective expressing a permanent attribute of character rather than the mere act which would be expressed by the participle in Greek, and the present indicative in English.

that raised him up from the dead...] The prominence given to the Resurrection as the ground of Faith and Hope is eminently characteristic of St Peter (Acts ii. 32—36, iii. 15, iv. 10). The redemptive act was completed in the shedding of the "precious blood," but the Resur-

22 glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing
ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the
Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love
23 one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again,
not of corruptible seed, but *of* incorruptible, by the word of
24 God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is*

rection and the "glory" of the Ascension were the foundation of man's confidence that the work had been completed. The "in God" expresses the *Credo in Deum* rather than *Credo Deo*; faith and hope were to find their object in God, be directed towards Him.

22. *Seeing ye have purified your souls*] It may be noted that the use of the Greek verb "purify," in this spiritual sense, is peculiar to St Peter, and to his friends St James (iv. 8) and St John (1 Joh. iii. 3). In Joh. xi. 55, Acts xxi. 24, 26, xxiv. 18, it is found in its ceremonial significance. In Acts xv. 9 and Tit. ii. 14, the Greek verb is different. The purity implied is prominently, as commonly with the cognate adjective, freedom from sensual lust, but includes within its range freedom from all forms of selfishness. The instrument by which, or the region in which, this work of purification is to be accomplished, is found in "obedience to the truth;" the Truth standing here for the sum and substance of the revelation of God in Christ.

unto unfeigned love of the brethren] The Greek noun which answers to the last four words is, in its wide range of meaning, almost, if not altogether, a coinage of Christian thought. The names of Ptolemy Philadelphus (=the lover of his brother) and of the city of Philadelphia (Rev. iii. 7) had probably given a wide currency to the adjective. St Paul uses it in Rom. xii. 10, 1 Thess. iv. 9, St Peter here and in 2 Pet. i. 7. The general bearing of the passage runs parallel to St Paul's "the end of the commandment is charity (better, **love**) out of a pure heart and faith unfeigned" (1 Tim. i. 5).

love one another with a pure heart fervently] The better MSS. omit "pure" which may have been inserted from a reminiscence of 1 Tim. i. 5. The adverb is strictly "intensely" rather than "fervently." It is noticeable that the only other passage in which it meets us in the New Testament is in Acts xii. 5, where it, or the cognate adjective, is used of the prayer offered by the Church for St Peter.

23. *being born again*] Better, **having been begotten again**, the verb being the same as that in verse 3. The "corruptible seed" is that which is the cause of man's natural birth, and the preposition which St Peter uses exactly expresses this thought of an originating cause. In the second clause, on the other hand, he uses the preposition which distinctly expresses instrumentality. The "word of God" is that **through** which God, the author of the new life, calls that life into being.

by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever] The Greek order of the words leaves it doubtful whether the two predicates belong to "the word," or to "God," but the sequence of thought is decisive

as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. 25

in favour of connecting them with the former. They are used to shew that the word of God, which is the seed of the new birth, is, as has been said, incorruptible. They prepare the way for the emphatic reiteration in verse 25, that the "word of the Lord" endureth for ever, the same word being used in the Greek as for the "abideth" of this verse.

It is obvious that the word of God is more here than any written book, more than any oral teaching of the Gospel, however mighty that teaching might be in its effects. If we cannot say that St Peter uses the term LOGOS with precisely the same significance as St John (John i. 1, 14), it is yet clear that he thinks of it as a divine, eternal, creative power, working in and on the soul of man. It was "the word of the Lord" which had thus come to the prophets of old, of which the Psalmist had spoken as "a lamp unto his feet," and "a light unto his path" (Ps. cxix. 105). St Peter's use of the term stands on the same level as that of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who speaks of "the word of God" as "quick and powerful...a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. iv. 12, 13). It is, i.e., nothing less than God manifested as speaking to the soul of man, a manifestation of which either the preached or the written word may be the instrument, but which may work independently of both, and is not to be identified with either.

24. *For all flesh is as grass*] The words have a two-fold interest: (1) as a quotation from the portion of Isaiah's prophecy (xl. 6—8) with which the Apostle must have been familiar in connexion with the ministry of the Baptist, and (2) as presenting another coincidence with the thoughts and language of the Epistle of St James (i. 10, 11), itself, in all probability, an echo of that prophecy. The passage is quoted almost verbally from the LXX. translation, the words "of man" taking the place of the "thereof" of the Hebrew. In "the word (*rhêma*) of the Lord" we have a different term from the *Logos* of verse 23. It has, perhaps, a slightly more concrete significance and may thus be thought of as pointing more specifically to the spoken message of the Gospel. It is doubtful, however, looking to the use of the word in Heb. i. 3, vi. 5, xi. 3; Eph. vi. 17, whether any such distinction was intended, and it is more probable that St Peter thought of the two terms as equivalents, using the word *rhêma* here, because he found it in the LXX. This "word of God," abiding for ever, was the subject of the Gospel message, but is not necessarily identified with it. It was proclaimed to men by the heralds of glad tidings even as Christ had proclaimed it.

2 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and
2 hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn
babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow

CHAPTER II.

1. *Wherefore laying aside*] The sequence of thought goes on, as is seen in the "new-born babes" of the next verse, from the thought of the "regeneration" of believers expressed in chap. i. 3, 23. As entering on a new and purer life they are to "lay aside" (compare the use of the kindred noun in connexion with baptism in chap. iii. 21) the evil that belongs to the old. As far as the list of evils is concerned, they point, especially in the "hypocrisies and evil speakings," to the besetting sins of the Jewish rather than the Gentile character, as condemned by our Lord (Matt. xxiii. et al.) and St James (iii. iv.), and so confirm the view which has been here taken, that the Epistle was throughout addressed mainly to Jewish converts.

2. *as newborn babes*] The Greek noun, like the English, implies the earliest stage of infancy. See Luke i. 41, 44, ii. 12, 16.

the sincere milk of the word] The English version tries to express the force of the original but has had recourse to a somewhat inadequate paraphrase. Literally, the words may be rendered as **the rational** (or **intellectual**) **milk**, the adjective having very nearly the force of "spiritual" in such passages as 1 Cor. x. 3, 4. The "milk" of which he speaks is that which nourishes the reason or mind, and not the body, and is found in the simpler form of the Truth as it is in Jesus which was presented by the Apostolic Church to the minds of its disciples. Looking to the other instances of parallelism between St Peter's language and those of the Epistles of St Paul, we can scarcely be wrong in thinking that here also he more or less reproduces what he had read in them. The word for "rational" meets us in Rom. xii. 1 ("reasonable" in the English version), in the same sense as here, and is not found elsewhere in the New Testament. The thought that those who are as yet in spiritual childhood, must be fed with the spiritual milk adapted to their state, is found in 1 Cor. iii. 2. Comp. also Heb. v. 12, 13. There is almost as striking a coincidence in the adjective *sincere* (better, **pure** or **unadulterated**), which expresses precisely the same thought as that of St Paul's words in 2 Cor. ii. 17 ("we are not, as the many, adulterators of the word of God") and 2 Cor. iv. 2 ("not dealing with the word of God deceitfully"). The thought implied in the word is that, however simple may be the truths which men teach, according to the capacities of their hearers, they should at all events be free from any admixture of conscious falsehood. The words fix the sentence of condemnation on the "pious frauds," on the *populus vult decipi et decipiatur*, on which even Christian teachers and Churches have too often acted. In the word "desire," or **long after** (the word expressing an almost passionate yearning), we have a sad reminder that the spiritual appetite is not as spontaneous as the natural. Infants do not need to be told to seek the mother's breast.

that ye may grow thereby] The better MSS. add the words **unto sal-**

thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gra- 3
cious. To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, dis- 4
allowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious,

vation. Though not essential to the sense, they give a worthy completeness to it, and it is not easy to understand how they came to be omitted in the later MSS.

3. *if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious*] Better, **if ye tasted**, as referring more definitely to the experiences of the first period of their life as Christians. The word "tasted" as applied to those experiences follows naturally, as in Heb. vi. 4, on the imagery of the milk. The Greek word for "gracious" itself carries on the metaphor of the tasting, being applied in Luke v. 39 to express the mellowness of wine ripened by age. The words are a quotation from Ps. xxxiv. 8 as it stands in the LXX. version. We can scarcely doubt that the Apostle saw in the Master he had owned in Christ the "Lord" of whom the Psalmist spoke. It is possible that he may have been led to choose the quotation from the close resemblance in sound between the two Greek words for "Christ" (*Christos*) and "gracious" (*Chrestos*). The acceptance of the name of Christian as carrying with it this significance, and being, as it were, *nomen et omen*, was common in the second century (Tertullian *Apol.* c. 3), and it would have been quite in accordance with Jewish habits of thought for St Peter to have anticipated that application.

4. *To whom coming, as unto a living stone*] The whole imagery changes, like a dissolving view, and in the place of the growth of babes nourished with spiritual milk, we have that of a building in which each disciple of Christ is as a "living stone" spontaneously taking its right place in the building that rests on Christ as the chief corner-stone. The new imagery is connected in St Peter's mind with its use in Ps. cxviii. 22 and Isai. xxviii. 16, but it is not without significance to note that we have the same sequence of the two metaphors in 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2 and 10, 11. It may be noted also that the Greek is bolder in its use of the image than the English, and has no particle of comparison, **to whom coming, even to a living stone.** The term "living" is used in its fullest sense, presenting the paradox of connecting the noun with the adjective which seems most remote from it. The lower sense of the word in which Latin writers applied the term *saxum vivum* to rocks in their natural form as distinct from those that had been hewn and shaped, is hardly admissible here.

disallowed indeed of men] The verb is the same as the "rejected" of Matt. xxi. 42. We cannot forget that the thoughts on which St Peter now enters had their starting-point in the citation of the Psalm by our Lord on that occasion. In the substitution of the wide term "men" for the "builders" of the Psalm, we may trace the feeling that it was not the rulers of the Jews only, nor even the Jews only as a nation, but mankind at large, by whom the "head of the corner" had been rejected. Here again we see in the Epistle the reproduction of the Apostle's earlier teaching (Acts iv. 11).

but chosen of God, and precious] More accurately, **but with God**

5 ye also, as lively stones, are built *up* a spiritual house, a
holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable
6 to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in

(i.e. in God's sight) **chosen, precious** (or, **held in honour**). The two words emphasize the contrast between man's rejection and God's acceptance. Both are taken from the LXX. of Isai. xxviii. 16. .

5. *ye also, as lively stones*] Better, **as living stones**, there being no reason for a variation in the English, to which there is nothing corresponding in the Greek. The repetition of the same participle gives prominence to the thought that believers are sharers in the life of Christ, and that, in the building up of the spiritual temple, each of these "living stones" takes its voluntary, though not self-originated, part. It is an open question, as far as the Greek is concerned, whether the verb is in the passive or the middle voice, in the indicative or the imperative mood, but the sense is, perhaps, best given by the rendering, **build yourselves up.**

a spiritual house] The words come as a secondary predicate of the previous clause. "This," St Peter says, "is what you will become by coming to Christ and building yourselves on Him." The "house," like the corner-stone, carries our thoughts back to the Temple as "the house of God" (1 Kings viii. 10), which finds its antitype in that *Ecclesia* to which St Paul attaches the same glorious title (1 Tim. iii. 15). We can hardly think that St Peter could write these words without remembering the words which had told him of the rock on which Christ would build His Church, and into the full meaning of which he was now, at last, entering (Matt. xvi. 18).

a holy priesthood] The thought of the Temple is followed naturally by that of its ritual and of those who are the chief agents in it. Here also there is a priesthood, but it is not attached, as in the Jewish Temple, to any sacerdotal caste, like that of the sons of Aaron, but is co-extensive with the whole company of worshippers. As in the patriarchal Church, as in the original ideal of Israel (Exod. xix. 5), from which the appointment of the Levitical priesthood was a distinctly retrograde step consequent on the unfitness of the nation for its high calling as a kingdom of priests, as in the vision of the future that floated before the eyes of Isaiah (lxi. 6), so now in the Church of Christ, there was to be no separate priesthood, in the old sense of the word, and with the old functions. All were to offer "spiritual sacrifices" (we note the identity of thought with Rom. xii. 1) as contrasted with the burnt-offerings or meat-offerings of Jewish ritual. And, by what to a Jew must have seemed at first the strangest of all paradoxes, and afterwards the development of a truth of which germinal hints had been given to his fathers, in this new order of things the Temple and the Priesthood were not, as in the old, distinguished and divided from each other, but were absolutely identical. The Priests who sacrificed in the true Temple, were themselves the stones of which that Temple was built.

acceptable to God] St Peter uses the stronger and more emphatic form of the adjective which was familiar on St Paul's lips (Rom. xv.

the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore 7 which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a 8 stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye *are* a chosen gene- 9

16, 31; 2 Cor. vi. 2, viii. 12). In the addition of the words "through Jesus Christ," we have at once the sanction for the Church's use of that form of words in connexion with all her acts of prayer and praise, and the implied truth that it is only through their union with Christ as the great High Priest and with His sacrifice that His people are able to share His priesthood and to offer their own spiritual sacrifices.

6. *Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture*] As the words are not quoted in exact accordance either with the LXX. or with the Hebrew, it is natural to see in them a citation from Isaiah xxviii. 16, freely made from memory.

a chief corner stone] The words, as in Ps. cxviii. 22, Eph. ii. 20, point to the stone at the corner where two walls met, and resting on which they were bonded together and made firm.

elect, precious] Better, to maintain the identity of phrase, **chosen, precious** (or, **held in honour**).

he that believeth on him shall not be confounded] The meaning of the Hebrew is fairly expressed by the English version, "He that believeth shall not make haste," i. e. shall go on his way calmly and trustfully, shall not be put to a hurried or hasty flight. Here St Peter follows the LXX. which expresses substantially the same thought.

7. *Unto you therefore which believe he is precious*] More accurately, **Unto you therefore that believe there is the honour.** The last words stand in direct connexion with the "shall not be ashamed" of the previous verse, and are not a predicate asserting what Christ is, but declare that honour, not shame, is the portion of those who believe on Him.

but unto them which be disobedient] The Greek word, like the English, expresses something more than the mere absence of belief and implies a deliberate resistance. To such as these, St Peter says, combining Isai. viii. 14, 15 with the other passages in which the symbolism of the stone was prominent, much in the same way as St Paul combines them in Rom. ix. 33, the very corner-stone itself became "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence." Here again his language is an echo of our Lord's (Matt. xxi. 44).

8. *which stumble at the word*] The "word," as before, is the sum and substance of the Gospel. Men opposing themselves to that word, looking on it as an obstacle to be got rid of, were as those who rush upon a firm-fixed stone, and who falling over it are sorely bruised.

whereunto also they were appointed] Attempts have been made to

ration, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath
10 called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which

soften the apparent fatalism of the words by carrying the antecedent of the "whereunto" as far back as verse 5, and seeing in the words the statement that even those who stumbled were appointed, as far as God's purpose was concerned, to be built up on Christ. It is, however, all but obvious that this puts a forced and artificial meaning on the Apostle's words. What he really affirms is that it is part of God's appointed order that the disobedient should stumble and be put to shame. And it may be noted that this way of looking on things is eminently characteristic of him. In the treachery of Judas he read the lesson that "the Scripture must needs have been fulfilled" (Acts i. 16). Stumbling, however, was not necessarily identical with falling irretrievably (Rom. xi. 11).

9. *But ye are a chosen generation*] The glories that attach to the company of believers in Christ are brought before us in a mosaic of Old Testament phraseology. The "chosen generation" comes from Isai. xliii. 20, the "royal priesthood" from the LXX. of Exod. xix. 6, where the English version has more accurately "a kingdom of priests." We note the recurrence of the thought in Rev. i. 6, v. 10. The same passage supplies the "holy nation."

a peculiar people] This somewhat singular word calls for a special note. The English translators appear to have used the term in its strictly etymological and almost forensic sense. The people of Christ, like Israel of old, were thought of as the special *peculium*, the possession, or property, of God. The adjective, however, has acquired in common usage so different a meaning that it would be better to translate the words, **a people for a special possession.** The noun or the cognate verb is found in the LXX. of the "*special* people" of Deut. vii. 6, in the "jewels" of Mal. iii. 17. The context shews however that Isai. xliii. 21 was most prominently in the Apostle's thoughts, "This people have I formed for myself (or, **gained as a possession for myself**); they shall shew forth my praise." In Eph. i. 14 the noun is rendered by "purchased possession," in 1 Thess. v. 9, 2 Thess. ii. 14, by "obtaining," in Heb. x. 39 by "saving." The primary idea of the Greek verb is that of acquiring for oneself by purchase or otherwise, and the noun accordingly denotes either the act of acquiring or that which is so acquired. Cranmer's Bible gives "a people which are won:" the Rhemish Version "a people of purchase."

that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you] The word for "praises" is that commonly used by Greek ethical writers for "virtue," and is so rendered in Phil. iv. 8 and 2 Pet. i. 3, 5. St Peter's choice of the term was determined apparently, as intimated in the preceding note, by its use in the LXX. of Isai. xliii. 21. Here, since the associations of the word in English hardly allow us to speak of the "virtues" of God, "excellences" would perhaps be a more adequate rendering: the Greek word, though connected both by Greek ethical

in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, 11

writers (Aristot. *Eth. Nicom.* III. 1) and by St Paul (Phil. iv. 8) with the thought of praise, cannot well itself have that meaning. The almost uniform reference, throughout the New Testament, of the act of calling to the Father, justifies the conclusion that St Peter so thinks of it here.

Darkness is, of course, the natural symbol for man's ignorance of God (comp. John viii. 12, Acts xxvi. 18, Eph. v. 8—13, Rom. xiii. 12), as light is for the true knowledge of Him. The epithet "marvellous," or **wonderful**, as applied to that light is peculiar to St Peter. Looking to the stress laid on the glory of the Transfiguration in 2 Pet. i. 16—18, we may, perhaps, see in this passage the impression which had been made upon him by what he had then seen of the "marvellous light" of the Eternal. Into that light, of which what he had seen was but the outward symbol, not he only but all who believed in Christ had now been called.

10. *Which in time past were not a people*] The reference is to the children of Gomer, with their strange ill-omened names, Lo-Ammi and Lo-Ruhamah (Hos. i. ii.): but it may be a question whether the citation is made directly from the prophet, or is traceable to St Paul's use of it in Rom. ix. 25. In favour of the former view is the fact that St Peter quotes it (1) in a different form from St Paul's, giving "had not obtained mercy" for "not beloved," following in this the text of the Alexandrian MS. of the LXX., and (2) in a different application, St Paul referring it to the calling of the Gentiles, while he applies it to that of Israel. Some interpreters, indeed, have seen in this passage also a proof that St Peter was writing to Gentile converts or thinking of them chiefly, but it may well be urged against this view that if the history of the prophet's adulterous wife had been to him a parable of the sin and repentance of Israel, it might well be so to the Apostle also. Had not his Master spoken of the people as "an evil and adulterous generation" (Matt. xii. 39)? Had not his friend St James addressed them as "adulterers and adulteresses" (James iv. 4)?

11. *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims*] This is manifestly the beginning of a fresh section of the Epistle. Somewhat after the manner of St Paul, the Apostle, after having allowed his thoughts to travel through the mysteries of redemption, reaches, as it were, the highest region of the truth, and then pauses in the act of writing or dictating, and takes a fresh start. In doing so, however, he goes back to the opening words of the Epistle (see note on chap. i. 1). Those to whom he wrote were "strangers and pilgrims" (the English reader must remember that "pilgrim" is but another form of *peregrinus*), not only as belonging to the Jews of the dispersion, but as being, like the patriarchs of old (Heb. xi. 13), men who, in whatever country they might be, felt that their true home was elsewhere. In the LXX. version of Ps. xxxix. 12 we find both the words and the thoughts to which St Peter

12 abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good

now gives utterance. It is obvious that the special local position of the disciples, though not, it may be, altogether excluded, is now thrown quite into the background.

abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul] The negative aspect of the Christian life is put forward first, as being prior, both in order of thought, and often in that of time, to its more positive development. The entreaty rests upon the character implied in the previous words. Travellers in a strange land, yet more in the land of enemies, do not care commonly to adopt all its customs. They retain their nationality. The exiles who hung their harps by the waters of Babylon did not forget Jerusalem, and would not profane its hymns by singing them at idol-feasts (Psalm cxxxvii. 1—3). The citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem were in like manner to keep themselves from all that would render them unfit for their true home. The words "fleshly lusts" have, perhaps, a somewhat wider range than the English term suggests, and take in all desires that originate in man's corrupt nature, as well as those directly connected with the appetites of the body: comp. St Paul's list of the "works of the flesh" in Gal. v. 19—21. In the description of these as "warring against the soul," we have another striking coincidence of language with St James (iv. 1) and St Paul (Rom. vii. 23). "Soul" stands here, as in chap. i. 9, for the higher element of man's nature which, in the more elaborate threefold division of man's nature, adopted by St Paul in 1 Thess. v. 23 and elsewhere, includes both "soul and spirit."

12. *having your conversation honest among the Gentiles*] On "conversation," see note on chap. i. 15. There is perhaps no better equivalent for the Greek word than "honest;" but it carries with it the thought of a nobler, more honourable, form of goodness than the English adjective. The special stress laid on the conduct of the disciples "among the *Gentiles*" confirms the view taken throughout these notes that the Epistle is addressed mainly to those of the Asiatic Churches who were by birth or adoption of "the Circumcision."

that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers] It is not without significance that St Peter uses the same word as had been used by the chief priests of our Lord (John xviii. 30). This Epistle (here, and ver. 14, iii. 16, iv. 15) is the only book in the New Testament, with the exception of the passage just referred to, in which the word occurs. The words indicate the growth of a widespread feeling of dislike shewing itself in calumny. So in Acts xxviii. 22 the disciples of Christ are described as "a sect everywhere spoken against." The chief charge at this time was probably that of "turning the world upside down" (Acts xvii. 6), i. e. of revolutionary tendencies, and this view is confirmed by the stress laid on obedience to all constituted authority in the next verse. With this were probably connected, as the sequel shews (verse 18, chap. iii. 1), the accusations of introducing discord into

works, *which* they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man 13

families, setting slaves against their masters, wives against their husbands. The more monstrous calumnies of worshipping an ass's head, of Thyesteian banquets of human flesh, and orgies of foulest license, were probably of later date.

they may by your good works, which they shall behold] The verb which St Peter uses is an unusual one, occurring in the New Testament only here and in chap. iii. 2. The use of the cognate noun in the "eye-witnesses" of 2 Pet. i. 16 may be noted as a coincidence pointing to identity of authorship. The history of the word as applied originally to those who were initiated in the third or highest order of the Eleusinian mysteries is not without interest. If we can suppose the Apostle to have become acquainted with that use of it, or even with the meaning derived from the use, we can imagine him choosing the word rather than the simple verb for "seeing" to express the thought that the disciples were as a "spectacle" (1 Cor. iv. 9; Heb. x. 33) to the world around them, and that those who belonged to that world were looking on with a searching and unfriendly gaze.

glorify God in the day of visitation] The usage of the Old Testament leaves it open whether the day in which God visits men is one of outward blessings as in Job x. 12, Luke i. 43, or of chastisement as in Isai. x 3. The sense in which the term is used by St Peter was probably determined by our Lord's use of "the time of thy visitation" in Luke xix. 44. There it is manifestly applied to the "accepted time," the season in which God was visiting His people, it might be by chastisements, as well as by the call to repentance and the offer of forgiveness. And this, we can scarcely doubt, is its meaning here also. There is a singular width of charity in St Peter's language. He anticipates "a day of visitation," a time of calamities, earthquakes, pestilences, famines, wars and rumours of wars, such as his Lord had foretold (Matt. xxiv. 6, 7), but his hope is not that the slanderers may then be put to shame and perish, but that they may then "glorify God" by seeing how in the midst of all chaos and disorder, the disciples of Christ were distinguished by works that were nobly good, by calmness, obedience, charity.

13. *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man*] The precept, like those of Rom. xiii. 1—7, points to this as the line of action which the circumstances of the time made most important, in order that the character of Christ's disciples might be vindicated against the widely-spread suspicion that they were elements of disorder. The word for "ordinance," usually translated "creature," may possibly have that sense here. So taken, the counsel would stand parallel to the "honour all men" of ver. 17, to the "be ye subject one to another" of ch. v. 5, and would express the thought that the Christian was to act and speak as a "*servus servorum*," submitting himself, as far as God's law would allow, even to the meanest. Against this view, however, it may be urged that "every human creature" would

for the Lord's sake: whether *it be* to the king, as supreme;
14 or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for
the punishment of evildoers, and *for* the praise of them
15 that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well

be a somewhat awkward periphrasis for "all men," and that the subdivision that follows points to something more specific. On the whole, therefore, there seems sufficient reason for accepting the English Version, and taking the word in the sense which it will well bear of "ordinance," or better, perhaps, **institution.** The obedience which is thus enjoined is to be rendered not through fear of punishment but "for the Lord's sake," partly as remembering His example (vv. 21, 22), partly in zeal for the honour of His name, lest that also be "blasphemed among the Gentiles" (Rom. ii. 24).

whether it be to the king, as supreme] The adjective is the same as in the "*higher* powers" of Rom. xiii. 1. The "king" is of course the Emperor Nero, the Greek language not supplying a word with the full significance of the Roman *Imperator*. So we have prayers for "kings," obviously including the Emperor, in 1 Tim. ii. 2. The "Governors" include the Pro-consuls or Pro-praetors of Roman provinces, and all officials such as the town-clerk of Ephesus, the Asiarchs, and other municipal authorities. (Acts xix. 31, 35, 38.)

14. *as unto them that are sent by him*] The tense of the Greek participle indicates that obedience was to be paid to those who, from time to time, were the local representatives of the central supreme authority. The identity of thought with Rom. xiii. 3, 4, will be noticed as another interesting coincidence in the teaching of the two Apostles. Both alike recognise that even an imperfect and corrupt government works, on the whole, for a greater good than lawless anarchy. Both therefore are against revolutionary attempts to destroy an established order. It has, of course, to be remembered that the Christian citizens of a Christian country now stand in a different position, in relation to the state, from that occupied by the disciples of the Apostolic Church, and have therefore different duties and responsibilities; among others, that of defending the "ordinance" or "institution" under which they live, whether that institution be monarchical or republican in its form, against open or insidious aggression.

15. *For so is the will of God*] Better, **for thus it is the will of God.** This was to be the chief, if not the only, *apologia* of Christians to the charges brought against them. They were accused of being evil-doers. They were to be conspicuous for well-doing. In the Greek for "put to silence" we have the word used in Matt. xxii. 12, 34, Mark i. 25, iv. 39, the primary meaning of which was "to enforce silence by a gag or muzzle." The word "ignorance," used elsewhere in the New Testament only in 1 Cor. xv. 34, implies something more than a mere ignorance of facts. One might almost describe it as a settled incapacity for knowing and judging rightly. The "foolish men" are the accusers and slanderers of ver. 12 rather than the official authorities of vv. 13, 14.

doing *ye* may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloke of malicious- 16
ness, but as the servants of God. Honour all *men*. Love 17

16. *as free, and not using your liberty for a cloke*] The English text gives the impression that the word "free" is closely connected with the preceding verse. In the Greek, however, the adjective is in the nominative and cannot be in apposition with the preceding participle for "well-doing" which is in the accusative case. We are led therefore to connect it with what follows. "As being free...honour all men..." The fact that men had been made free with the freedom which Christ had given (comp. John viii. 32, 36, Gal. v. 1) brought with it an obligation to use the freedom rightly. If under the pretence that they were asserting their Christian freedom, they were rude, over-bearing, insolent, regardless of the conventional courtesies of life, what was this but to make their liberty a cloke (the word is the same as that used in the LXX. of Exod. xxvi. 14 for the "covering" of the Tabernacle) for baseness? The word just given answers better to the comprehensive meaning of the Greek word than the more specific "maliciousness." In Gal. v. 13, 2 Pet. ii. 19 we find indications that the warning was but too much needed.

"License they mean when they cry liberty"

was as true in the Apostolic age as it has been in later times.

as the servants of God] St Peter, like St Paul, brings together the two contrasts as expressing one of the paradoxes of the spiritual life. There is a service even in slavery, which is not only compatible with freedom, but is absolutely its condition. Comp. Rom. vi. 16—18, 1 Cor. vii. 22, 23.

17. *Honour all men*] The universality of the precept is not to be narrowed by any arbitrary restriction of its range to those to whom honour was due. St Peter had been taught of God "not to call any man common or unclean" (Acts x. 28). The fact that there were in every man traces of the image of God after which he had been created, and infinite undeveloped capacities which might issue in the restoration of that image to its original brightness, was in itself a reason for treating all, even the vilest and most degraded, with some measure of respect. It is obvious that the command is perfectly consistent with shewing degrees of honour according to the variations in men's character and position. It would almost seem as if the Apostle chose the most terse and epigrammatic form for these great laws of conduct that their very brevity might impress them indelibly on the minds of his readers.

Love the brotherhood] In the Greek, as in the English, the abstract noun is used to express the collective unity made up of many individuals. Within the Christian society in which all were brothers, as being children of the same Father, there might well be a warmer feeling of affection than that which was felt for those who were outside it. If St Peter's rule seems at first somewhat narrower than that of

13 the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the

Matt. v. 44 ("Love your enemies"), it may be remembered that the special love of the brethren does not shut out other forms and degrees of love, and that our Lord's words are therefore left in all their full force of obligation.

Fear God. Honour the king] The king, as before, is the Emperor. The two verbs seem deliberately chosen to express the feelings of man's conduct in regard to divine and human authority. They are to fear God with the holy reverential awe of sons, with that fear which is "the beginning of wisdom" (Ps. cxi. 10, Prov. i. 7). They are not to fear man more than God, however great may be the authority with which he is invested. St Paul's conduct before the high-priest, Felix, Festus and Agrippa (Acts xxiii.—xxvi.) may be noted as a practical illustration of St Peter's precept. We may, perhaps, trace in the juxtaposition of the two precepts a reproduction of the teaching of Prov. xxiv. 21.

18. *Servants, be subject to your masters*] The counsels thus opening are carried on to the close of the chapter. The fulness with which slaves are thus addressed, here and in Eph. vi. 5—8, Col. iii. 22, 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2, indicates the large proportion of converts that belonged to that class. Nearly all the names in Rom. xvi. and many of those of other members of the Church are found in the *Columbaria* or *Catacombs* of Rome as belonging to slaves or freedmen. The term for "servants," here and in Luke xvi. 13, Acts x. 7, Rom. xiv. 4, differs from the more common word as pointing specially to household servants, the "domestics" of a family. It may have been chosen by St Peter as including the wide class of *libertini* or freedmen and freedwomen who, though no longer in the *status* of slavery, were still largely employed in the households of the upper classes, as scribes, musicians, teachers, physicians, needle-women and the like. It is obvious that the new thoughts of converts to the faith of Christ must have brought with them some peculiar dangers. They had learnt that all men were equal in the sight of God. Might they not be tempted to assert that equality in word or act? They felt themselves raised to a higher life than their heathen masters. Could they endure to serve loyally and humbly those whom they looked on as doomed to an inevitable perdition? Was it not their chief duty to escape by flight or purchase from the degradation and dangers of their position? The teaching of St Paul in 1 Cor. vii. 21—23, as well as in the passages above referred to, shews how strongly he felt the urgency of this danger. Cardinal Wiseman's *Fabiola* may be mentioned as giving, with special vividness and insight, a picture of this aspect of the social life of the early Church.

with all fear] So St Paul urges obedience "with fear and trembling" (Eph. vi. 5). There was, looking to the then existing relations of society, a comparative nobleness in a service into which the fear of offending their master, as distinct from the mere dread of the scourge or other pun-

good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this *is* thank- 19
worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief,
suffering wrongfully. For what glory *is it*, if, when ye 20
be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but
if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently,
this *is* acceptable with God. For *even* hereunto were ye 21

ishment, entered as a motive into the obedience of slaves. And this was not to depend on the character of the master. He might be good and easy-going, or perverse and irritable. Their duty was in either case to submit, with thankfulness in the one case, with a cheerful patience in the other.

19. *For this is thankworthy*] The word *charis*, commonly translated "grace," is here used in the sense, which attaches also to the Latin *gratia*, as in *ago tibi gratias*, and the French *mille graces*, of thanks or cause for thanks. So in Luke vi. 32 the same word is used in "what *thank* have ye," where the context shews that it is equivalent to a "reward," and in that case, as in this, a reward from God. It is not unreasonable to suppose that St Peter's choice of the term was determined by the use of it which St Luke records in his report of the Sermon on the Plain.

for conscience toward God] Literally, **consciousness of God**, i.e. of His presence as seeing, judging, helping, rewarding, His suffering servants. The phrase is analogous to the "conscience of the idol" in 1 Cor. viii. 7.

suffering wrongfully] Natural impulse, one might almost say natural ethics, sanctions the burning indignation and desire to retaliate which is caused by the sense of wrong. Here, as in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 39), which this teaching distinctly reproduces, that is made the crucial instance in which the Christian is to shew that the law of Christ is his rule of life. It is obvious that in this case the allowance of any exception to the rule would make it altogether inoperative. Each party in a dispute or quarrel thinks himself at the moment in the right, and it is only by acting on the principle that the more he believes himself to be in the right the more it is his duty to submit patiently, that a man can free himself from an endless entanglement of recriminations and retaliations.

20. *if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently*] Literally, **if when ye are buffeted, being in fault, ye shall endure it.** The common practice of Roman life, as of all countries in which slavery has prevailed, made the blow with the hand, the strict meaning of "buffeting" (Mark xiv. 65), or the stroke of the scourge, a thing of almost daily usage.

this is acceptable with God] The Greek word is the same as that rendered "thankworthy" in the previous verse. It would obviously have been better, though "acceptable" expresses the sense fairly enough, to have retained that word here also.

21. *For even hereunto were ye called*] The thoughts of the Apostle

called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an
22 example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin,
23 neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when
he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he

travel from the teaching of Christ which he had heard to the life which he had witnessed. The very calling to be a disciple involved the taking up the cross and following Him (Matt. x. 38, xvi. 24; Luke xiv. 27). It was the very law of the Christian life that men "must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts xiv. 22). And if this was true of all believers it was true in a yet higher sense of those who, when they were called to know Christ, were called as slaves, and as such were to abide in that calling and find in it a discipline of sanctification (comp. 1 Cor. vii. 22). And the Apostle had seen what that taking up the cross involved. It is not without significance that in almost every instance in which the example of Christ is referred to, it is in special connexion with His patience under sufferings. Stress is laid on his suffering *for* us, as making the analogy of the pattern sufferer more complete. He, too, was "buffeted" for no fault of His (Matt. xxvi. 67).

leaving us an example] The Greek noun, not found elsewhere in the New Testament, seems to have been a technical word for the drawing which was set before young students of art for them to copy. Such a picture of patience under suffering St Peter now paints, as with a few vivid touches, and sets it before those who were novices in the school of the Christ-like life that they may become artists worthy of their Master.

22. *Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth*] It is suggestive as indicating the line of prophetic interpretation in which the Apostle had been led on, that as soon as he begins to speak of the sufferings of Christ, he falls, as it were, naturally into the language of Isaiah liii. 9, as he found it (with the one exception that he gives "sin" for "iniquity") in the LXX. version. The two clauses assert for the righteous sufferer a perfect sinlessness both in act and word.

23. *Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again*] Here again, though we have no direct quotation, it is impossible to overlook the allusive reference to the silence of the sufferer as portrayed in Isai. liii. 7. Personal recollection was, however, the main source of the vivid picture which the Apostle draws, dwelling mainly on those features which the life of the slaves best enabled them to reproduce. They were tempted to return "railing for railing" (chap. iii. 9). Christ had met taunts and revilings with a silent patience. They in their passionate indignation too often threatened revenge in some near or distant future. He, though he might have asked His Father for twelve legions of angels, had uttered no threats of judgment, but had committed Himself (as in the words on the Cross, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," Luke xxiii. 46) to the righteous Judge. So should the slaves who suffered wrongfully commit their cause to God in the full assurance that they will one day have righteous judgment. The strange rendering in the

threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his 24
own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were

Vulgate, "tradebat judicanti se *injuste*," as though the words referred not to God, but to Pilate, for which there is no Greek MS. authority, must be regarded as an arbitrary alteration made on the assumption that this was the crowning act of submissive patience.

24. *who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree*] Here again we have an unmistakeable reference to the language of Isai. liii. 12. The Apostle, though he has begun with pointing to the sufferings of Christ as an example, cannot rest satisfied with speaking of them only under that aspect. He remembers that his Lord had spoken of Himself as giving His life a ransom for many (Matt. xx. 28), of His blood as that of a new covenant (Matt. xxvi. 28). He must speak accordingly, even to the slaves whom he calls upon to follow in the footsteps of their Master, of the atoning, mediatorial, sacrificial aspects of His death. Each word is full of a profound significance. The Greek verb for "bare" (*anapherein*) is always used with a liturgical sacrificial meaning, sometimes, in a directly transitive sense, of him who offers a sacrifice, as James ii. 21 ("Abraham...when he had *offered* Isaac"), Heb. vii. 27, xiii. 15, and in this very chapter (verse 5); sometimes of the victim offered, as bearing the sins of those who have transgressed, and for whom a sacrifice is required, as in Heb. ix. 28 and the LXX. of Isaiah liii. 12. Here, Christ being at once the Priest and the Victim, one meaning seems to melt into the other. He *offers* Himself: He *bears* the sins of many. But if there was a priest and a sacrifice, where was the altar? The Apostle finds that altar in the cross, just as many of the best commentators, including even Roman theologians like Estius and Aquinas, recognise a reference to the cross in the "we have an altar" of Heb. xiii. 10. In the word for "tree," used instead of that for "cross," we have the same term as that in Gal. iii. 13, where St Paul's choice of it was obviously determined by its use in the LXX. of Deut. xxi. 23. The word was somewhat more generic than "cross," and included a whole class of punishments to which slaves were subject, impaling, the stocks (Acts xvi. 24), and the like. It is possible that St Peter, in writing to slaves, may have chosen it as bringing home to their thoughts the parallelism between Christ's sufferings and their own (comp. the "non pasces in cruce corvos" of Horace *Epp.* I. 16, l. 48); but its occurrence in St Luke's reports of his speeches in Acts v. 30, x. 39 makes it more probable that it was simply a familiar term with him.

that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness] The Greek word for "being dead" is a somewhat unusual one, and is not found elsewhere in the New Testament. As a word it has to a certain extent an euphemistic character, like "departing," "being away," and is so far analogous to the *exodos* or "decease" of 2 Pet. i. 15. The context leaves no doubt that the English rendering of the word fairly expresses

25 healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

its true meaning. "Having died" would perhaps give more accurately the force of the aorist participle. The thought presents another instance of parallelism between St Peter and St Paul (Rom. vi. 2, 11; Gal. ii. 19) so close that it at least suggests the idea of derivation. In both cases the tense used implies a single act at a definite point of time, and as interpreted by St Paul's teaching, and, we may add, by that of St Peter himself (chap. iii. 21), that point of time can hardly be referred to any other occasion than that of the Baptism of those to whom he writes. In that rite they were mystically sharers in the death and entombment of Christ, and they were made so in order that they might live to Him in the righteousness of a new life.

by whose stripes ye were healed] The word for "stripes" means strictly the livid mark or wheal left on the flesh by the scourge. Comp. Ecclus. xxviii. 17. We may well believe that the specific term was chosen rather than any more general word like "sufferings" or "passion," as bringing before the minds of the slave readers of the Epistle the feature of greatest ignominy in their Lord's sufferings (Matt. xxvii. 26; Mark xv. 15), that in which they might find the closest parallelism with their own. When the scourge so freely used in Roman households left the quivering flesh red and raw, they were to remember that Christ also had so suffered, and that the stripes inflicted on Him were part of the process by which He was enabled to be the Healer of mankind. The words are cited from the LXX. of Isai. liii. 5.

25. *For ye were as sheep going astray*] The sequence of thought is suggested by the "all we like sheep have gone astray" of Isai. liii. 6, but the imagery could scarcely fail to recall to the mind of the Apostle the state of Israel "as sheep that had no shepherd" (Matt. ix. 36), and the parable of the lost sheep (Matt. xviii. 12, 13; Luke xv. 4). The image had been a familiar one almost from the earliest times to describe the state of a people plunged into anarchy and confusion by the loss of their true leader (Num. xxvii. 17; 1 Kings xxii. 17).

but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls] We can scarcely fail to connect the words with those which St Peter had once heard as to the "other sheep" who were not of the "fold" of Galilee and Jerusalem (John x. 16). In the "strangers of the dispersion" he might well recognise some, at least, of those other sheep. In the thought of Christ as the "Shepherd" we have primarily the echo of the teaching of our Lord just referred to, but the name at least suggests a possible reference to the older utterances of prophecy and devotion in Ps. xxiii. 1, Isai. xl. 11, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 24. In the word for "Bishop" (*Episcopos*) (better perhaps, looking to the later associations that have gathered round the English term) **guardian** or **protector**, we may, possibly, find a reference to the use of the cognate verb in the LXX. of Ezek. xxxiv. 11. It deserves to be noted, however, that the Greek noun is often used in the New Testament in special

Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; 3

association with the thought of the Shepherd's work. Comp. Acts xx. 28, 1 Pet. v. 4. So in like manner, "Pastors" or "Shepherds" find their place in the classification of Christian Ministers in Eph. iv. 11. There is, perhaps, a special stress laid on Christ being the Shepherd of their *souls*. Their bodies might be subject to the power and caprices of their masters, but their higher nature, that which was their true self, was subject only to the loving care of the Great Shepherd.

CHAPTER III.

1. *Likewise, ye wives*] The sequence of thought is every way suggestive. The Apostle passes from the all but universal relation of the master and the slave as one element of social life, to the other, yet more universal, and involving from the Roman point of view almost as great a subordination, of husband and wife. Here also it was his object to impress on men and women, especially on the latter, the thought that the doctrine of Christ was no element of disorder. The stress which he lays on their duties may be fairly taken as indicating the prominence of women among the converts to the new faith. Of that prominence we have sufficient evidence in the narrative of the Acts (xvi. 13, xvii. 4, 12). In what follows we have again a reproduction of the teaching of St Paul (Eph. v. 22—24; Col. iii. 18; 1 Tim. ii. 9). It is not without interest to recall the fact that Aristotle makes the two relations of which St Peter speaks, that of husband and wife, that of master and slave, the germ-cells, as it were, out of which all political society has been developed (Arist. *Pol.* I. 2).

be in subjection to your own husbands] The use of the Greek adjective for "own" is not intended, as some interpreters have thought, to emphasize a contrast between obedience rendered to their own husbands and that which they might be tempted to give to others, but rather to lay stress on the fact that their husbands, because they were such, had a right to expect the due measure of obedience in all things lawful. The words that follow indicate the frequency of the cases in which the wife only was a convert. The Greek text runs "that **even** if any obey not the word," as though, in some cases at least, it might be expected that husband and wife would both have been converted together. In "the word" we have the familiar collective expression for the whole doctrine of the Gospel. The Greek verb for "obey not" implies, as in chap. ii. 7, Acts xiv. 2, Heb. iii. 18, xi. 31, a positive antagonism rather than the mere absence of belief and obedience.

may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives] The Greek for "word" has no article, and the probable meaning is not "without the open preaching of the word of Christ," but rather, **without speech, without a word [being uttered]**. On "conversation," see note on chap. i. 15. Here, where "conversation" is used as the direct antithesis to speech, the contrast between the new and the old mean-

2 while they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with
3 fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on

ings of the word is seen with a singular vividness. The silent preaching of conduct is what the Apostle relied on as a more effective instrument of conversion than any argument or debate. In the verb "be won," literally, **be gained over**, we have the same word as that used by St Paul in 1 Cor. ix. 19, 20, and by our Lord, in teaching which must have made a special impression on St Peter's mind, in Matt. xviii. 15.

2. *while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear*] On the verb "behold" see note on chap. ii. 12. The word "coupled" is not in the Greek, and the true meaning of the word is that the "chaste **conduct**" of the women who are addressed must have its ground and sphere of action in the reverential awe which is the right feeling of a wife towards ner husband.

3. *that outward adorning of plaiting the hair*] So St Paul lays stress in 1 Tim. ii. 9 on the "braided hair and gold and pearls" which were at the time conspicuous in the toilet of Greek and Roman women. The sculptures of the Empire at this period shew to what extent this "braiding" and "plaiting" was carried, sometimes rising to a height of some inches above the head, sometimes intertwined with twisted chains of gold or strings of pearls. The fineness and fashion of the garments of women had at this time reached an almost unparalleled extravagance. The filmy half-transparent tissue of the Coan loom, the dyed garments of Miletus and Sardis, were especially in demand. Christian women, St Peter teaches, were not to seek their adornment in such things as these, but in "a meek and quiet spirit." The question may be asked, Are the Apostle's words prohibitive as well as hortatory? Is it wrong for Christian women now to plait their hair, or to wear gold ornaments or pearls? The answer to that question must be left mainly to the individual conscience. "Let every one be fully persuaded in her own mind." As some help to a decision, however, it may be noted (1) that the language is not that of formal prohibition, but of a comparative estimate of the value of the two kinds of adornment; (2) that in regard to the third form of ornamentation, seeing that some clothes must be worn, the words cannot have a merely prohibitive force; and (3) that in the possible, if not common, case of the husband giving such ornaments and wishing his wife to wear them, the "meek and quiet spirit" which the Apostle recommends would naturally shew itself in complying with his requests rather than in an obstinate and froward refusal. On the whole then, as a rule bearing upon daily life, we may say that while the words do not condemn the use of jewellery, or attention to the colour and the form of dress, within the limits of simplicity and economy, they tend to minimise that form of personal adornment, and bid women trust not to them, but to moral qualities, as elements of attraction. It would be, perhaps, a safe rule that no woman should spend money for herself on such ornaments.

of apparel; but *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in 4
that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek
and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.
For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, 5
who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjec-

4. *the hidden man of the heart*] The phrase is identical in meaning with the "inward man" of Rom. vii. 22, 2 Cor. iv. 16, Ephes. iii. 16. The word for "man" is one which takes within its range women as well as men. The "hidden *humanity* of the heart" would be somewhat too abstract in its form, and "the hidden *human*," though the word has the sanction of one or two poets of mark, would sound too grotesque, but either would express the meaning of the word adequately. The "hidden man of the heart"—(the genitive expresses the fact that the life of the "hidden man" manifests itself in the sphere of the feelings and affections)—is the "new creature" (2 Cor. v. 17, Gal. vi. 15), the "Christ formed in us" (Gal. iv. 19), on which St Paul loves to dwell. Men do not see it with the outward eye, but they can be made to recognise its presence.

in that which is not corruptible] The contrast rests on the same sense of the perishableness even of the gold and silver and gems which men looked on as most durable, that we have seen in chap. i. 18. These pass away, but the true ornament of the hidden man has its being in the region of the imperishable.

of a meek and quiet spirit] The New Testament usage of the second adjective is confined to this passage and to 1 Tim. ii. 2. So far as we can distinguish, where it is almost impossible to separate, "meekness," the absence of self-assertion, of any morbid self-consciousness, may be thought of as the cause, and "quietness," the calm tranquillity which is not only not an element of disturbance, but checks the action of such elements in others, as the effect. In their union the Apostle, speaking, we may hope, from his own experience, rightly finds a charm, a *kosmos*, compared with which gold and jewels are as nothing.

of great price] The Greek word is the same as that used of the "*very precious* ointment" in Mark xiv. 3 and the "*costly* array" of 1 Tim. ii. 9. The connexion of St Peter with St Mark's Gospel (see *Introduction*) gives a special interest to the first of these references. He had learnt the lesson that God's estimate of value differs altogether from man's, and is not to be measured by the standard which the world commonly applies.

5. *For after this manner in the old time*] It is obvious from the special instance given in the next verse that the Apostle has in his mind exclusively the saintly wives and mothers of the Old Testament. The names of Penelope, Andromache, Alcestis, which are familiar to us as patterns of wifely excellence, were not likely to have come within the horizon of his knowledge.

who trusted in God] More accurately, **who hoped in God.** It may be noted that the same inadequate rendering is found in the Authorized Version of Rom. xv. 12, and Philem. *v.* 22. The idea of

6 tion unto their own husbands: *even* as Sara obeyed Abra-
ham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as
7 ye do well, and are not afraid *with* any amazement. Like-

"trust" is, of course, not far removed from that of "hope," but the variation of rendering was a needless one, and ought therefore to have been avoided.

being in subjection unto their own husbands] The repetition of the same verb as that used in ver. 1 and ch. ii. 13, should be noticed as reproducing what might almost be called the key-note of the Epistle. It occurs again in ch. iii. 22, v. 5.

6. *even as Sara obeyed Abraham*] The tense which St Peter uses would seem to imply a reference to some special instance of obedience, but, as the history of Genesis supplies no such instance in act, we are left to infer that he saw in her use of "my lord," in speaking of her husband (Gen. xviii. 12), a representative utterance that implied a sense of habitual subordination. It seems strange to refer to literature like that of the sixth satire of Juvenal in illustration of an Epistle of St Peter, but there can be no clearer evidence that the general corruption of the Empire had extended itself to the life of home, and that over and above the prevalence of adultery and divorce, the wives of Rome, and we may believe also, of the cities that followed in the wake of Rome, had well-nigh thrown aside all sense of the reverence which the Apostle looked on as essential to the holiness, and therefore the happiness, of married life.

whose daughters ye are] **whose daughters ye became.** If the words were addressed to women who were converts from heathenism, we might see in the words a suggestive parallel to those of St Paul, that Abraham was the father of "all them that believe though they be not circumcised" (Rom. iv. 11), that "they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham" (Gal. iii. 7). Taking this view there would be a special interest in the fact that St Peter, the married Apostle, told the female converts from among the Gentiles that they were as truly daughters of Sarah as their husbands, if believing, were sons of Abraham. On the assumption which has been adopted throughout these notes, as on the whole the most probable, that the Epistle was really addressed, as it purports to be, to the Jews of the dispersion, the words have another significance. The daughters of Sarah according to the flesh are told that they only became truly her children when they reproduced her character. The words, on this view, present a striking parallelism to those in which St Paul speaks of Abraham as being "the father not of the circumcision only, as such, but of those who walk in the steps of Abraham's faith" (Rom. iv. 12).

as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement] The construction of the Greek sentence is not quite clear, and admits of being taken either (1) as in the English version, or (2) treating the words "as Sara obeyed.....whose daughters ye became" as a parenthesis, we may refer the words "doing well" to the "holy women" of ver. 5.

wise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and

On the whole (1) seems preferable. It may be questioned whether the words "so long as" rightly represent the force of the participle. If we adopt the rendering given above ("ye *became*") that meaning is clearly inadmissible, and we have to see in the two participles the process by which Christian women *became* daughters **by doing good and not being afraid.** The word for "amazement" does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament, but the cognate verb is found in Luke xxi. 9, xxiv. 37. The noun itself meets us in the LXX. of Prov. iii. 25. It implies the crouching, shuddering fear of one who is overwhelmed with terror. In warning the women to whom he writes against such a fear, St Peter seems to be guarding them against the unwisdom of rushing from one extreme to the other. The Christian wives of unbelieving husbands, whether Jews or heathens, might often have much to bear from them, but if they were always shewing their terror, cowering as if they expected the curse or the blow, that very demeanour was certain to make matters worse. It was a tacit reproach, and therefore would but irritate and annoy. Wisely therefore does the Apostle urge on them a different line of action. "Be certain," he seems to say, "that you are doing what is right and good, and then go about the daily tasks of your household life with a cheerful intrepidity." Two interpretations may be noticed only to be rejected, (1) that which takes the second clause as meaning "be not afraid of anything that causes terror," and (2) that which renders it "doing good, even though you are not afraid," as though stress were laid on their good conduct being spontaneous and not originating in fear.

7. *dwell with them according to knowledge*] It is significant that while the Apostle dwells emphatically on the case of Christian women who have unbelieving husbands, his exhortations to men seem to take for granted that their wives were of one mind with them. In the then existing state of society this was, of course, natural enough. The wife might be converted without the husband, but hardly the husband without the wife. The word for "dwell together" (not found elsewhere) is clearly intended to cover all the relations of married life. In those relations men were to act "according to knowledge," i. e. with a clear perception of all that marriage involved, and of the right relation in which each of the two parties to the contract stood to the other. The wife was not to be treated as a slave or a concubine, nor again as the ruler and mistress of the house, but as a helpmeet in the daily work of life, a sharer in its higher hopes and duties, the mother of children to be brought up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel] The word for "giving," not found elsewhere in the New Testament, implies an equitable apportionment, that for "wife" is strictly an adjective agreeing with "vessel," and would therefore be rightly rendered by **female.** In the term "vessel," which finds a parallel in 1 Thess. iv. 4, we have the thought that all, men and women alike, are "instru-

as *being* heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

8 Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of
9 another, love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous: not ren-

ments" which God has made for His service (comp. 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21). The husband is bound to think of himself in that light. He must recognise himself as the stronger vessel of the two, and therefore, because *noblesse oblige*, he must render due honour to the weaker, seeking to strengthen and purify and elevate it.

as being heirs together of the grace of life] The MSS. present various readings, some making the word "heirs" refer to the husbands and some to the wives. As, in either case, stress is laid on their being joint heirs. there is practically no difference. The "life" in which both are thus called to be sharers is, of course, none other than the eternal life which consists in knowing God. (John xvii. 3.)

that your prayers be not hindered] Some MSS. give a stronger form of the verb, "that your prayers be not **cut off** (or, **stopped**)." The more natural interpretation is that which refers the pronoun to both the husband and the wife. Where there was no reciprocated respect, each recognising the high vocation of the other, there could be no union of heart and soul in prayer. Where the husband thought of the wife only as ministering to his comfort or his pleasures, as one whom he might, as both Jewish and Roman law permitted, repudiate at will, there could be no recognition of the fact that she shared his highest hopes. The words clearly include, though they do not dwell on them, the special hindrances to prayer referred to in 1 Cor. vii. 3—5.

8. *Finally, be ye all of one mind*] From the two special relations which were the groundwork of social life, the Apostle passes to wider and more general precepts. The adjective for "of one mind" (not found elsewhere in the New Testament) implies, like the corresponding verb in Rom. xii. 16, xv. 5, and elsewhere, unity of aim and purpose. That for "having compassion one of another" (this also used only by St Peter in the New Testament) exactly answers, as describing the temper that rejoices with those that rejoice and weeps with them that weep, to our word **sympathizing**.

love as brethren] Here also we have an adjective peculiar to St Peter. The corresponding substantive has met us in ch. i. 22. It may mean either what the English version gives, or "lovers of the brethren." On the whole the latter meaning seems preferable.

pitiful] The history of the word, literally meaning "good-hearted," affords an interesting illustration of the influence of Christian thought. It was used by Greek writers, especially Greek medical writers, such as Hippocrates (p. 89 c), to describe what we should call the sanguine or courageous temperament. By St Peter and St Paul (Eph. iv. 32), it is used, as the context in each case shews, for the emotional temper which shews itself in pity and affection.

be courteous] The MSS. present two readings, one of which, "cour-

dering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, 10
and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that *they* speak no guile: let him 11
eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and

teous" or better, perhaps, **friendly**, is a fair rendering, and the other a word not found elsewhere, but meaning "lowly" or "humble," and corresponding to the noun "humility" in Acts xx. 19; Phil. ii. 3; 1 Pet. v. 5.

9. *not rendering evil for evil*] We may probably see in the words a verbal reproduction of the precept of Rom. xii. 17, 1 Thess. v. 15, an echo of the spirit of the teaching of Matt. v. 39. As this clause forbids retaliation in act, so that which follows forbids retaliation in words.

that ye are thereunto called] Better, **were called**, as referring definitely to the fact and time of their conversion.

that ye should inherit a blessing] It is not without significance that this is given as the reason for not retaliating. God blesses, therefore we should bless. He forgives us, and therefore we should forgive others. Vindictiveness, in any form, whether in word or act, is at variance with the conditions on which that inheritance is offered and involves therefore its certain forfeiture.

10—12. *For he that will love life*] The three verses are from the LXX. version of Ps. xxxiv. 12—16. It is characteristic of St Peter that he thus quotes from the Old Testament without any formula of citation. (See 2 Pet. ii. 22.) In this case, however, the quotation does not agree with the extant text of the LXX. which gives "What man is he that would fain have life, loving good days?" The English version of the first clause hardly expresses the force of the Greek, which gives literally, **he that willeth to love life**. The combination may have been chosen to express the strength of the yearning for life in its lower or higher forms which the words imply, or more probably that the object wished for is not mere life, as such, but a life that a man can love, instead of hating with the hatred that is engendered, on the one hand, by the satiety of the pleasure seeker, and on the other, by bitterness and wrath. It need hardly be said that the Apostle uses the words of the Psalmist in a higher meaning. "Life" with him is "life eternal," and the "good days" are not those of outward prosperity, but of the peace that passeth understanding.

let him refrain his tongue from evil] The last words were probably those which determined the choice of the quotation. In itself it is, of course, inclusive of the "guile," which follows in the second clause, but here it follows the laws of antithetical parallelism which prevail in Hebrew Poetry, and must be understood of open evil, such as the "railing" which the Apostle had just condemned.

12 ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the
righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their pray-
ers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that
13 do evil. And who *is* he that will harm you, if ye be fol-
14 lowers of *that which is* good? But and if ye suffer for
righteousness' sake, happy *are ye:* and be not afraid of

11. *let him seek peace, and ensue it*] Better, perhaps, **pursue** or **follow after**, as in 1 Tim. vi. 11. The verb "ensue" has ceased almost, if not altogether, to be used transitively. It implies, both in itself, and by its position in the verse as a climax, the strongest form of seeking.

12. *For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous*] It may be noted that the "for" is added by the Apostle to emphasize the sequence of thought. There is no conjunction either in the Hebrew or the LXX. The disciples of Christ were to find peace and calmness in the thought of the Omniscience of God. He knew all, and would requite all. Vengeance—so far as men dared desire vengeance—was to be left to Him (Rom. xii. 19). The two prepositions "*over* the righteous" and "*against* them that do evil" express, perhaps, the thought of the original, but as the Greek preposition is the same in both cases, they are open to the charge of being an interpolated refinement. The eyes of God are **upon** both the good and the evil. It lies in the nature of the case that the result is protective or punitive according to the character of each.

13. *And who is he that will harm you*] The quotation ceases and the Apostle adds the question, the answer to which seems to him a necessary inference from it. The form of the question reminds us of that of Rom. viii. 33—35, still more, perhaps, of Isai. l. 9, where the LXX. version gives for "condemn" the very word which is here rendered "harm." It is not without interest to note that the same word is used of Herod's *vexing* the Church in Acts xii. 1. St Peter had learnt, in his endurance of the sufferings that then fell on him, that the persecutor has no real power to harm.

if ye be followers of that which is good] The better MSS. give the word (*zelôtai*) which is commonly rendered "zealous for," as in Acts xxi. 20, xxii. 3. As a word in frequent use among devout Jews, (as e.g. in the name of the Apostle Simon Zelotes,) it has a special force as addressed to the Church of the Circumcision. "Be zealous," he seems to say to them, "not as Pharisees and Scribes are zealous, as you yourselves were wont to be, for the Law as a moral and ceremonial Code, but for that which is absolutely good." The received reading, "followers," or better, **imitators**, probably originated in the Greek word for "good" being taken as masculine, and, as so taken, referred to Christ. In that case, "followers" suggested itself as a fitter word (as in 1 Cor. iv. 16; Eph. v. 1; 1 Thess. i. 6) than "zealots."

14. *But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye*] Better,

their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the 15
Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an
answer to every *man* that asketh you a reason of the hope
that is in you with meekness and fear: having a good con- 16
science; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-
doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good
conversation in Christ. For *it is* better, if the will of God 17
be so, that *ye* suffer for well doing, than for evil doing. For 18

"But **even** if ye suffer, **blessed** are ye," as reproducing more closely the beatitude of Matt. v. 10.

be not afraid of their terror] The words are taken (as before, without any formula of citation) from the LXX. of Isai. viii. 12, 13. "Terror" is here probably objective in its sense (as in Ps. xci. 5), and "their terror"=the terror which they, your enemies and persecutors, cause.

15. *but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts*] The better MSS. give **the Lord Christ.** The original text was probably altered by transcribers to bring it into conformity with the LXX. text of Isaiah. To "sanctify Christ" or "God" was to count His Name as holy above all other names, His fear, as the only fear which men ought to cherish, and therefore as the safeguard against all undue fear of men. The words "in your hearts" are added by the Apostle to the text of Isaiah as shewing that the "hallowing" of which he speaks should work in the root and centre of their spiritual being.

be ready always to give an answer] The words imply that the disciples of Christ were not to take refuge in the silence to which fear might prompt. They were to be ready with a defence, a vindication, an *apologia*, for their faith and hope. And this answer was to be given not in a tone of threatening defiance, but "in meekness" as regards the interrogator, whether the questions were put officially or in private, and "in fear," partly lest the truth should suffer through any infirmities in its defenders, partly because the spirit of reverential awe towards God was the best safeguard against such infirmities.

16. *having a good conscience*] We note once more the reproduction by St Peter of one of St Paul's favourite phrases (Acts xxiii. 1, xxiv. 16; 1 Tim. i. 5, 19). Stress is laid on this condition as warning men that no skill of speech would do the work of the apologist rightly, if his life were inconsistent with his profession. Only when the two were in harmony with each other, could he give his answer at once with becoming boldness and with due reverence.

they may be ashamed that falsely accuse...] The latter verb, translated "despitefully use you," in Matt. v. 44, Luke vi. 28, indicates clamorous reviling rather than a formal accusation. On the general character of such revilings, see note on chap. ii. 12, and on "conversation," note on chap. i. 15. The "conversation" or "conduct" is here defined not only by the adjective, "good," but as being "in Christ," i.e. in union with Him, and therefore after His likeness.

17. *For it is better, if the will of God be so*] Literally, the Greek

Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death
19 in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he

presenting a kind of emphatic pleonasm, **if the will of God should so will.** The Apostle falls back upon the thought of chap. ii. 20. Men feel most aggrieved when they suffer wrongfully. They are told that it is precisely in such sufferings that they should find ground for rejoicing. These, at any rate, cannot fail to work out for them some greater good.

18. *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins*] As in the previous chapter (ii. 21—25), so here, the Apostle cannot think of any righteous sufferer needing comfort without thinking also of *the* righteous Sufferer whom he had known. And here also, as there, though he begins with thinking of Him as an example, he cannot rest in that thought, but passes almost immediately to the higher aspects of that work as sacrificial and atoning. Every word that follows is full of significance—"Christ **suffered**" (better than "hath suffered," as representing the sufferings as belonging entirely to the past), once and once for all. The closeness of the parallelism with Heb. ix. 26—28 might almost suggest the inference that St Peter was acquainted with that Epistle, but it admits also of the more probable explanation that both writers represent the current teaching of the Apostolic Church. The precise Greek phrase "for sins" (literally, "**concerning**, or **on account of**, sins") is used in Heb. x. 6, 8, 18, 26, and in the LXX. of Ps. xl. 6, and was almost the technical phrase of the Levitical Code (Lev. iv. 33).

the just for the unjust] The preposition in this case means "on behalf of," and is that used of the efficacy of Christ's sufferings in Mark xiv. 24, John vi. 51, 1 Cor. v. 7, 1 Tim. ii. 6. It is used also of our sufferings for Christ (Phil. i. 29), or for our brother men (Eph. iii. 1, 13), and therefore does not by itself express the vicarious character of the death of Christ, though it naturally runs up into it. In the emphatic description of Christ as "the Just," we have an echo of St Peter's own words in Acts iii. 14; in the stress laid on the fact that He, the just, died for the unjust, a like echo of the teaching of St Paul in Rom. v. 6.

that he might bring us to God] This, then, from St Peter's point of view, and not a mere exemption from an infinite penalty, was the end contemplated in the death of Christ. "Access to God," the right to come boldly to the throne of grace (Heb. iv. 16), was with him as with St Paul (Rom. v. 2; Eph. ii. 18, iii. 12), the final cause of the redemptive work. The verb, it may be noted, is not used elsewhere in this connexion in the New Testament.

being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit] The change of the preposition and the mode of printing "Spirit" both shew that the translators took the second clause as referring to the Holy Spirit, as quickening the human body of Christ in His resurrection from the dead. The carefully balanced contrast between the two clauses shews, however, that this cannot be the meaning, and that

went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which some- 20

we have here an antithesis, like that of Rom. i. 3, 4, between the "flesh" and the human "spirit" of the man Christ Jesus, like that between the "manifest in the flesh" and "justified in the spirit" of 1 Tim. iii. 16. ' By the "flesh" He was subject to the law of death, but in the very act of dying, His "spirit" was quickened, even prior to the resurrection of His body, into a fresh energy and activity. What was the sphere and what the result of that activity, the next verse informs us.

19. *by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison*] We enter here on a passage of which widely different interpretations have been given. It seems best in dealing with it to give in the first place what seems to be the true sequence of thought, and afterwards to examine the other views which appear to the present writer less satisfactory. It is obvious that every word will require a careful study in its relation to the context. (1) For "by which" we ought to read "in which." It was not by the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit, but in His human spirit as distinct from the flesh, that He who had preached to men living in the flesh on earth now went and preached to the spirits that had an existence separate from the flesh. (2) The word "went" is, in like manner, full of significance. It comes from the Apostle who was the first to proclaim that the "spirit" or "soul" of Christ had passed into Hades, but had not been left there (Acts ii. 31). It agrees with the language of St Paul in the Epistle to which we have found so many references in this Epistle, that He had "descended first into the lower parts of the earth," i. e. into the region which the current belief of the time recognised as the habitation of the disembodied spirits of the dead (Eph. iv. 9). It harmonises with the language of the Apostle who was St Peter's dearest friend when he records the language in which the risen Lord had spoken of Himself as having "the keys of Hades and of death," as having been dead, but now "alive for evermore" (Rev. i. 18). Taking all these facts together, we cannot see in the words anything but an attestation of the truth which the Church Catholic has received in the Apostles' Creed, that Christ "died and was buried and descended into Hell." And if we accept the record of St Peter's speeches in the Acts as a true record, and compare the assured freedom and clearness of his teaching there with his imperfect insight into the character of our Lord's work during the whole period of His ministry prior to the Resurrection, we can scarcely fail to see in his interpretation of the words "thou shalt not leave my soul in hell," the first-fruits of the method of prophetic interpretation which he had learnt from our Lord Himself when He expounded to His disciples the things that were written concerning Himself in the Law, and the Prophets, and the Psalms (Luke xxiv. 44), when He spoke to them of "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts i. 3). In the special truth on which the Apostle now lays stress, we must see, unless we think of him as taking up a legendary tradition, as writing either what had been revealed to him, "not by flesh and blood, but by his Father in

time were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God

heaven" (Matt. xvi. 17), or as reporting what he had himself heard from the lips of the risen Lord. Of the two views the latter seems every way the more probable, and accepting it, we have to remember also that it was a record in which he was guided by the teaching of the Spirit.

And he "went and preached." The latter word is used throughout the Gospels of the work of Christ as proclaiming "the Gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. iv. 23), preaching "repentance" (Matt. iv. 17), and the glad tidings of remission of sins as following upon repentance. It would do violence to all true methods of interpretation to assume that the Apostle, who had been converted by that preaching and had afterwards been a fellow-worker in it, would use the word in any other meaning now. We cannot think of the work to which the Spirit of Christ went as that of proclaiming an irrevocable sentence of condemnation. This interpretation, resting adequately on its own grounds, is, it need hardly be said, confirmed almost beyond the shadow of a doubt by the words of ch. iv. 6, that "the Gospel was preached also to the dead." Those to whom He thus preached were "spirits." The context determines the sense of this word as denoting that element of man's personality which survives when the body perishes. So, in Heb. xii. 23, we read of "the *spirits* of just men made perfect;" and the same sense attaches to the words in Luke xxiv. 37, 39, Acts xxiii. 8, 9, and in the "*spirits* and souls of the righteous" in the *Benedicite Omnia Opera*. And these spirits are in "prison." The Greek word, as applied to a place, can hardly have any other meaning than that here given (see Matt. xiv. 3, 10, Mark vi. 17, 27, Luke xxi. 12), and in Rev. xx. 7 it is distinctly used of the prison-house of Satan. The "spirits in prison" cannot well mean anything but disembodied souls, under a greater or less degree of condemnation, waiting for their final sentence, and undergoing meanwhile a punishment retributive or corrective (see note on 2 Pet. ii. 9). Had the Apostle stopped there we might have thought of the preaching of which he speaks as having been addressed to all who were in such a prison. The prison itself may be thought of as part of Hades contrasted with the Paradise of God, which was opened, as in Luke xxiii. 43, Rev. ii. 7, to the penitent and the faithful.

20. *which sometime were disobedient*] The words that follow, however, appear to limit the range of the preaching within comparatively narrow boundaries. The "spirits" of whom St Peter speaks were those who had "once been disobedient:" the "once" being further defined as the time when "the long-suffering of God **was waiting** in the days of Noah." We naturally ask as we read the words, (1) why the preaching was confined to these, or (2) if the preaching itself was not so confined, why this was the only aspect of it on which the Apostle thought fit to dwell? The answer to the first question cannot be given with any confidence. It is behind the veil which we cannot lift. All that we can say is that the fact thus revealed gives us at least some ground for seeing in it a part of God's dealings with the

waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing,

human race, and that it is not unreasonable to infer an analogous treatment of those who were in an analogous condition. The answer to the second question is, perhaps, to be found in the prominence given to the history of Noah in our Lord's eschatological teaching, as in Matt. xxiv. 37, 38, Luke xvii. 26, 27, and in the manifest impression which that history had made on St Peter's mind, as seen in his reference to it both here and 2 Pet. ii. 5, iii. 6. It is a conjecture, but not, I think, an improbable or irreverent one, that the disciple's mind may have been turned by our Lord's words to anxious enquiries as to the destiny of those who had been planting and building, buying and selling, when "the flood came and took them all away," and that what he now states had been the answer to such enquiries. What was the result of the preaching we are not here told, the Apostle's thoughts travelling on rapidly to the symbolic or typical aspect presented by the record of the Flood, but the notes on ch. iv. 6 will shew that his mind still dwelt on it, and that he takes it up again as a dropped thread in the argument of the Epistle. It will be noted, whatever view we may take of the interpretation of the passage as a whole, that it is the disobedience, and not any after-repentance at the moment of death, of those who lived in the days of Noah that is here dwelt on.

Such is, it is believed, the natural and true interpretation of St Peter's words. It finds a confirmation in the teaching of some of the earliest fathers of the Church, in Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* VI. 6), and Origen, and Athanasius (*cont. Apollin.* I. 13), and Cyril of Alexandria (*in Joann.* xvi. 16). Even Augustine, at one time, held that the effect of Christ's descent into Hades had been to set free some who were condemned to the torments of Hell (*Epist. ad Euodium*, CLXIV.), and Jerome (on Matt. xii. 29, Eph. iv. 10) adopted it without any hesitation. Its acceptance at an early date is attested by the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, nearly the whole of which is given to a narrative of the triumph of Christ over Hades and Death, who are personified as the Potentates of darkness. It tells how He delivered Adam from the penalty of his sin, and brought the patriarchs from a lower to a higher blessedness, and emptied the prison-house, and set the captives free, and erected the cross in the midst of Hades, that there also it might preach salvation. Legendary and fantastic as the details may be, they testify to the prevalence of a wide-spread tradition, and that tradition is more naturally referred to the teaching of St Peter in this passage as the germ out of which it was developed than to any other source. As a matter of history, the article "He descended into Hell," i. e. into Hades, first appeared in the Apostles' Creed at a time when the tradition was almost universally accepted, and when the words of the Creed could not fail to be associated in men's minds with the hope which it embodied.

It must be admitted, however, that the weight of many great names may be urged on behalf of other interpretations, and that some of them display, to say the least, considerable ingenuity. The common element in all of them is the desire to evade what seems the natural

inference from the words, that they point to a wider hope of repentance and conversion as possible after death than the interpreters were willing to admit. They divide themselves into two classes: (1) those who accept the words as referring to a descent into Hades, and (2) those who give them an entirely different interpretation. Under (1) we have (*a*) the view already noticed that the "preaching" was one of condemnation, anticipating the final judgment. It has been shewn to be untenable, and has so few names of weight on its side that it does not deserve more than a passing notice. (*b*) The view that Christ descended into Hades to deliver the souls of the righteous, of Seth, and Abel, and Abraham, and the other saints of the Old Testament, can claim a somewhat higher authority. It entered, as has been seen, into the Gospel of Nicodemus. It was adopted by Irenæus, Tertullian, Hippolytus. It was popular alike in the theology of many of the Schoolmen, and in mediæval art. It was accepted by Zwingli and Calvin among the Reformers, and receives a partial sanction from the teaching of our own Church as seen in the original form of Art. III. as drawn up in 1552; and in the metrical paraphrase of the Apostles' Creed which was at one time attached with a quasi-authority to the Prayer-Book, and in which we find the statement that Christ descended into Hell that He might be

> "To those who long in darkness were
> The true joy of their hearts."

It is obvious, however, that whatever probability may attach to this speculation as such, it has scarcely any real point of contact with St Peter's words. He speaks of "the days of Noah:" it takes in the whole patriarchal age, if not the whole history of Israel. He speaks of those who had been "disobedient." It assumes penitence and faith, and at least a partial holiness. The touch of poetry in Calvin's view that the word for "prison" should be taken as meaning the "watch-tower" upon which the spirits of the righteous were standing, as in the attitude of eager expectation, looking out for the coming of the King whom they had seen, as afar off, in the days of their pilgrimage, cannot rescue it from its inherent untenableness. (*c*) A modification of the previous view has found favour with some writers, among whom the most notable are Estius, Bellarmine, Luther, Bengel. They avoid the difficulty which we have seen to be fatal to that view, and limit the application of St Peter's words to those who had lived in the time of the Deluge, and they make the preaching one of pardon or deliverance, but, under the influence of the dogma that "there is no repentance in the grave," they assume that the message of the Gospel came to those only who turned to God before they sank finally in the mighty waters. It need hardly be said that this was to strain Scripture to make it fit in with their own theories, and to read into the words something that is not found there. St Peter, as has been urged above, would have said, "to those who were sometime disobedient *and afterwards repented*" if this had been what he meant to say.

(2) The other interpretation avoids all these minor difficulties

wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The 21

by going altogether on a different track. It has the authority of some great representative theologians, Augustine among the Fathers (*ut supra*), Aquinas among the Schoolmen (*Summ. Theolog.* III. Qu. LII. Art. 3), Bishop Pearson among Anglican divines. It starts with denying that there is any reference at all to the descent into Hades. Christ, it says, went in Spirit, not in the flesh, i. e. before His Incarnation, and preached to the spirits who are now in prison under condemnation, or were then in the prison-house of selfishness and unbelief, or simply in that of the body. He preached in Noah's preaching, and that preaching was without effect except for the souls of Noah and his household. There is something, perhaps, attractive in the avoidance of what have been regarded as dangerous inferences from the natural meaning of St Peter's words, something also in the bold ingenuity which rejects at once that natural meaning and the Catholic tradition which grew out of it: but, over and above the grave preliminary objection that it never would have suggested itself but for dogmatic prepossessions, it is not too much to say that it breaks down at every point. It disconnects the work of preaching from the death of Christ with which St Peter connects it. It empties the words "he went" of all significance and reduces them to an empty pleonasm. It substitutes a personal identification of the preaching of Christ with that of Noah for the more scriptural language, as in ch. i. 11, that the Spirit which prompted the latter was one with the Spirit which Christ gave to His disciples. The whole line of exegesis comes under the condemnation of being "a fond thing vainly invented" for a dogmatic purpose. A collection of most of the passages from the Fathers bearing on the subject will be found in the Notes to "Pearson on the Creed" on the Article "He descended into Hell," and in the Article *Eschatology* by the present writer in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Biography*.

wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water] The last words admit of being taken either locally "they were saved, i.e. were brought safely, through the water," "were delivered from the destruction which it brought to others," or instrumentally, "they were saved by means of the water." The latter interpretation presents, at first, the difficulty that it represents the waters of the deluge, as well as the ark, as a means of deliverance. The parallelism between the type and the antitype in the next verse, leaves, however, no doubt that this was the thought which St Peter had in his mind. He saw in the very judgment which swept away so many that which brought deliverance to others. In the stress laid upon the "few" that were thus saved, we may legitimately recognise the impression made by our Lord's answer to the question, Are there few that be saved? (Luke xiii. 23). The Apostle looked round him and saw that those who were in the way of salvation were few in number. He looked back upon the earliest records of the work of a preaching of repentance and found that then also few only were delivered. In the reference to the "long-suffering" of God as waiting and leading to repentance, we find a striking parallel to the language of 2 Pet. iii. 9, and in both we cannot doubt that

like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the

the thought present to the writer's mind was that "God was not willing that any should perish."

21. *The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us*] The MSS. present two readings; one that of the *Textus Receptus*, answering to the English Version as giving the relative pronoun in the dative, the other, supported by the better MSS., giving the pronoun in the nominative, "which also" (sc. the element of water) "the **antitype** [of the deluge,] doth even now save us," and then he adds, as explaining what was the antitype, the word "baptism" in apposition with the subject of the sentence. At first it seems hard to see the parallelism between the flood which destroyed and the baptism which saves, but reflection will shew that the Apostle may well have thought of the deluge as burying the old evils of the world and giving the human race, as it were, a fresh start, under new and better conditions, a world, in some sense, regenerated or brought into a new covenant with God, and therefore new relations to Him. Does not the teaching of the previous verse suggest the inference that he thought of the flood as having been even for those who perished in it, not merely an instrument of destruction, but as placing even the souls of the disobedient in a region in which they were not shut out from the pitying love of the Father who there also did not "will that any should perish"?

not the putting away of the filth of the flesh] The Greek word for "putting away" may be noted as one of those common to the two Epistles (see note on 2 Pet. i. 14). The implied protest against the notion that this was all that was meant by Christian baptism, though it might be necessary both for Jewish and heathen converts, gains immensely in its significance if we think of the Epistle as addressed mainly to the former class. They were in danger of looking upon baptism, not as the sacrament of a new birth, but as standing on the same level as the "washing" or "baptism" (the same word is used) of the older ritual. So, even during the ministry of the Baptist, there was a dispute between some of his disciples and the Jews "about purification" (John iii. 25), obviously rising out of that confusion of thought. So it formed part of the elementary instruction of Christian catechumens that they should learn the "doctrine of baptisms" (Heb. vi. 2), i.e. the distinction between the Jewish and the Christian rites that went almost or altogether[1] by the same name. St Peter warns men against the perilous thought that they washed away their sins by the mere outward act. So far as he may have contemplated heathen converts at all we may remember that they too thought of guilt as washed away by a purely ceremonial institution. So Ovid, *Fast.* II. 45,

> "Full easy souls who dream the crystal flood
> Can wash away the deep-dyed stain of blood."

[1] The tendency to desynonymize led to the term *baptisma* in the neuter being used of the Christian rite, while the masculine *baptismos* was used in a more generic sense.

answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrec-

[Ah, nimium faciles qui tristia crimina caedis
Fluminea tolli posse putetis aqua.]

Comp. also Juven. *Sat.* VI. 522, Persius, *Sat.* II. 15, Horace, *Sat.* II. 3. 290. History records but too many instances of the revival of a like superstition. The tendency to postpone baptism in order to cancel the sins that were in the meantime accumulating, and avoid the danger of post-baptismal sin, of which we see conspicuous instances in the lives of Constantine and Augustine, the mediæval dogma still lingering in popular belief, that unbaptized infants are excluded from salvation; these are examples of ways of looking at baptism more or less analogous to that which St Peter condemns. With him the saving power of baptism varies with the activity and purity of the moral consciousness of the baptized.

but the answer of a good conscience toward God] The words admit of very different interpretations. (1) The Greek word translated "answer" means primarily "**question**," "enquiry." If this sense be admitted here, there would then rise the question whether the words "of a good conscience" were in the genitive of the subject or the object. If the former, the condition on which St Peter lays stress would be equivalent to (*a*) the enquiry of a good conscience, the seeking of the soul after God; if the latter, that condition would be (*b*) the prayer addressed to God for a good conscience. Neither of these interpretations, however, is satisfactory. It is against (*a*) that it is the idea of baptism that men are no longer seeking God but have found Him. It is against (*b*) that it is also the idea of baptism that it is more than the asking for a gift. A true solution is found partly in the forensic use of the Greek word for question, as including, like our word "examination," both question and answer, and so applied to the whole process of a covenant, the conditions of which were determined by mutual interrogatories and affirmative or negative replies, and partly in the fact that at a date so early that it is reasonable to infer an Apostolic origin, the liturgical administration of baptism involved interrogatories and answers, in substance identical with those that have been in use in the Church at large and are in use still. "Dost thou renounce Satan?" "I do renounce him." "Dost thou believe in Christ?" "I do believe in Him," the second question sometimes taking the form "Dost thou take thy stand with Christ?" and the answer, "I do take my stand." In this practice of interrogation then we find that which explains St Peter's meaning. That which is of the essence of the saving power of baptism is the confession and the profession which precedes it. If that comes from a conscience (see notes on chaps. ii. 19, iii. 16) that really renounces sin and believes on Christ, then baptism, as the channel through which the grace of the new birth is conveyed and the convert admitted into the Church of Christ, "saves us," but not otherwise. The practice of Infant Baptism, though the scales of argument both as regards Scripture and antiquity turn in its favour, presents, it must be admitted, an apparent inversion of the right order, though the idea is still retained in the questions put to the sponsors who answer in the

22 tion of Jesus Christ: who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

4 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the

infant's name, as his representatives. If the question is asked, What then is the effect of Infant Baptism? the answer must be found, that it is, in the language of Scripture, as a new birth, the admission into new conditions of life, into, as it were, the citizenship of a new country. It gives the promise and potency of life, but its power to save the man that grows out of the infant varies with the fulfilment of the conditions when consciousness is developed. Now, as when St Peter wrote, it is not the "putting away the filth of the flesh" that saves, but "the answer of a good conscience towards God."

by the resurrection of Jesus Christ] So far the words have brought before us the human side of baptism. But the rite has also a divine side and this the last words of the verse bring before us. Baptism derives its power to save from the Resurrection of Christ. It brings us into union with the life of Him who "was dead and is alive for evermore" (Rev. i. 18). We are buried with Him in baptism, planted together with Him in the likeness of His death, that we may be also in the likeness of His resurrection (Rom. vi. 4, 5).

22. *who is gone into heaven*] The parallelism between the substance of this verse and that of 1 Tim. iii. 16, and of both with the closing clauses of the second section of the Apostles' Creed, leaves scarcely any room for doubt that we have here a precious fragment of the baptismal profession of faith of the Apostolic Church. The train of thought of the previous verse naturally led on to this. This was what the answer of a good conscience towards God involved. In the union of confession with the mouth and belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, in Rom. x. 9, we may probably trace a reference to a like formulary. The word for "he is gone" is the same participle as that in verse 19 and is important as determining its meaning. If there was a real Ascension into Heaven, there was also a real descent into Hades. St Peter seems to echo the words of St Paul, "Now that he ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" (Eph. iv. 9.)

angels and authorities and powers] Here again the phraseology reminds us of that of the twin Epistles of St Paul (Eph. i. 21, Col. i. 16). "Authorities" and "powers" are used as comprehensive terms, including the whole hierarchy of heaven, Cherubim, Seraphim and the like; probably also, looking to Col. ii. 15, Phil. ii. 10, and the manifest sequence of thought from verse 19, the powers of evil who had been subdued by the conquering Christ in His descent into Hades.

CHAPTER IV.

1. *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered...in the flesh*] The thoughts of the Apostle go back, somewhat after the manner of St Paul

flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that *he* 2 no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of 3 *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gen-

after a dogmatic digression, to the point from which he had started. Christ had suffered in the flesh. If those who had been baptized in His name were called so to suffer, they, looking to the glory that had followed on His sufferings, were to follow His example. They were, it might be, engaged in a tremendous conflict, but they needed no other armour than "the mind of Christ," the temper of patient submission and unwavering trust in the wisdom and love of the Father.

for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin] If this had been the close of the sentence we might have looked on the "suffering" of which the Apostle speaks, as including death, as it had included it in the case of Christ. So taken, the words might seem to express the familiar thought that "Death only can from sin release," as in the Rabbinic maxim "He that is dead is freed from sin" (Rom. vi. 7), that men were to welcome the sufferings that brought death near to them, as working out their complete emancipation. The words that follow, however, make this interpretation impossible, and the "ceasing from sin" must therefore be understood of that "deadness to sin," "sin no longer having dominion over us," of which St Paul speaks in Rom. vi. 7—11. That Apostle, it may be noted, though he quotes the Rabbinic proverb, transfers its application from literal to spiritual death, and St Peter, following a like train of thought, affirms as a general law of the spiritual life that the very act of suffering in the mind of Christ and for Him so strengthens the powers of will and faith that the sufferer is *ipso facto* delivered from the life in which sin is dominant. It is hard to think of a martyr in the hour of death, or of a confessor patiently bearing his cross, as malignant or fraudulent or impure.

2. *that he no longer should live the rest of his time*] The Greek form of the sentence points rather to the result than to the purpose of sufferings so borne, but the result in this case was one which implied a divine purpose. The "lusts" or "desires" of men are pointedly contrasted with "the will of God," the wild restless cravings with the calm and fixed purpose. It is not without significance to remember that St Paul, in an Epistle which St Peter had clearly seen, had written "This is the will of God, even our sanctification" (1 Thess. iv. 3), and that St Peter himself teaches "He is not willing that any should perish" (2 Pet. iii. 9).

3. *For the time past of our life may suffice*] The language is that of grave irony. Enough time, and more than enough, had been already given to the world. Was it not well to give some time now to God? The general line of thought runs parallel to that of Rom. xiii. 11, 12.

to have wrought the will of the Gentiles] The question meets us whether these words imply that the writer was, here at least, contemplating converts from heathenism, or still thinking only of the Jews of

tiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:
4 wherein they think it strange that you run not with *them* to

the dispersion. On the one hand, it may be said that it was more natural for a Jew writing to Jews to speak of "the heathen" or "the Gentiles." If the reading "may suffice *us*" be the right one, the fact that the Apostle joins himself with those to whom he writes strengthens that conclusion. The better MSS., however, omit the pronoun. The "abominable idolatries," on the other hand, may seem decisive in favour of the supposition that this part of the Epistle was intended for Gentile readers: but here also the word of warning would be as applicable to lax and licentious Jews, or to those who had been proselytes to Judaism, and who had not given up their attendance at idol-feasts or eating things sacrificed to idols (comp. 1 Cor. viii. 10, Rev. ii. 14, 20).

lasciviousness] The Greek word is in the plural as expressing the manifold forms or acts of impurity. The word is always applied to the darker forms of evil (Mark vii. 22; Rom. xiii. 13; 2 Pet. ii. 2, 7, 18).

excess of wine] The Greek word is found in the LXX. of Deut. xxi. 20, Isai. lvi. 12, but not elsewhere in the New Testament.

banquetings] Literally, **drinking-parties.** The word went naturally as in other Greek writers with "revellings."

abominable idolatries] The Greek adjective means, as in Acts x. 28, simply "unlawful:" but as in the Latin *nefas*, *nefanda*, *nefarius*, the idea of that which is at variance not merely with human but with natural law tends to pass into that of a guilt which makes men shudder. It has been suggested above that even here the Apostle may have present to his thoughts the lives of licentious Jews falling into heathen ways rather than of Gentiles pure and simple. The Books of Maccabees (1 Macc. i. 13, 14; 2 Macc. iv. 13, 14) shew that there had been a strong drift to apostasy of this kind under the Syrian Monarchy. The Temples, Gymnasia and Theatres built by the Herods had recently shewed a like tendency. At the very time when St Peter wrote there were Jews hanging about the court of Nero and Poppæa, taking part as actors in the imperial orgies (Joseph. *Life*, c. 3). It has been suggested that St Peter may have meant to refer to the old worship of Baal and Moloch and Ashtoreth and the groves and the calves which had prevailed in the history of Israel and Judah, so that the words "the time past may suffice" call on them to turn over a new leaf in their national existence, but the explanation of the words just given seems more natural and adequate.

4. *wherein they think it strange*] It may be worth noting that the same word is used to express (1) coming as a stranger (Acts x. 6, 18, xxi. 16) and (2) as here, in verse 12 and Acts xvii. 20, counting a person or thing strange. The "wherein" points to the change of life implied in the previous verse. "In which matter, in regard to which." The words imply a change like that of 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. The heathen found that his old companions, even his Jewish companions, had acquired, when they became Christians, a new way of looking at things. Con-

the same excess of riot, speaking evil *of you:* who shall 5
give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and
the dead. For for this cause was the gospel preached also 6

science was more sensitive. The standard of honesty, purity, and temperance was higher than before. It is not hard, even from our own experience, to picture to ourselves the surprise of the heathen when he found his friend refusing an invitation to a banquet, shrinking from contact with the prostitutes of Greek cities, or when there, passing the wine-cup untasted.

to the same excess of riot] The Greek words are singularly forcible. That for "excess," not found elsewhere in the New Testament, means primarily the "confluence" of waters—then the cistern, sink, or cesspool into which waters have flowed. The underlying metaphor implied in the words reminds us of Juvenal's (*Sat.* III. 62)

"Jam pridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes"
(Syria's Orontes into Tiber flows),

when he wishes to paint Rome as the meeting-point of the world's vices. That for "riot" is used, in the adverbial form, of the life of the prodigal in Luke xv. 13, and as a noun here and in Eph. v. 18; Tit. i. 6. Compounded as it is of the negative particle and of the root of the verb "to save," it may mean either (1) the state in which a man no longer thinks of saving anything, health, money, character, in the indulgence of his passions, or (2) one in which there is no longer any hope of his being saved himself from utter ruin. The former is probably the dominant meaning of the word. In either case it indicates the basest form of profligacy.

speaking evil of you] More accurately, **reviling.** The word is that which is more commonly translated "blaspheming" in direct reference to God. Even here, and in Acts xiii. 45, xviii. 6, where it is used in reference to men, the other or darker sense can scarcely be thought of as altogether absent. Men blasphemed God when they reviled His servants.

5. *who shall give account*] The phrase is one of the many echoes in this Epistle of our Lord's teaching (Luke xvi. 2). The thought of the Final Judgment from which there will be no appeal is made here, as in 1 Cor. iv. 5, a motive for patience and courage under the false accusations and unjust judgments of men. They who now demand an account (chap. iii. 15) will one day have to render it. Christ holds Himself in readiness to judge both the living and the dead. There is nothing in the context to lead us to any other than a literal interpretation of the familiar phraseology. Commentators who have taken the words of those who are spiritually living and spiritually dead have been led, for the most part, by their unwillingness to accept the natural meaning of the words that follow.

6. *For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead*] The thought that Christ was ready to judge the great company of the dead, as well as those who were living when the Gospel was

to *them that are* dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

7 But the end of all *things* is at hand: be ye therefore

preached by His messengers, leads the Apostle back to the truth which had been partially uttered when he had spoken of the work of Christ in preaching to "the spirits in prison." The question might be asked, How were the dead to be judged by their acceptance or rejection of the Gospel when they had passed away without any opportunity of hearing it? He finds the answer in the fact that to them also the Gospel-message had been brought. Those who were disobedient in the days of Noah are now seen by him as representatives of mankind at large. Of some of these his Lord Himself had taught him that if they had seen the wonderful works which attested His ministry and mission, "they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes" (Matt. xi. 21). Was it not a natural inference from those words, confirmed by what had been revealed to him as to the descent into Hades, that that opportunity had been given?

that they might be judged according to men in the flesh] The contrast between "flesh" and "spirit" stands parallel to that in chap. iii. 18. The "dead" had the Gospel preached to them that they might be judged by a judgment, which was remedial as well as penal, in that lower sensuous nature in which they had sinned. They were judged "according to men," or better, **after the manner of men**, by the laws by which all men are judged according to their works, but the purpose of that judgment, like that of the judgments that come upon men in this life, was to rescue them from a final condemnation. The whole passage presents a striking parallelism to St Paul's "delivering men to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. v. 5), to his words "when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (1 Cor. xi. 32). Following what we have learnt to call the ideas of analogy and continuity, the Apostle teaches that death does not change altogether the nature and the purpose of the Divine Judgments, and that purpose is that they "according to God," in a manner determined by His will and wisdom, should live, in the highest sense of life (John xvii. 3), in that element of their nature which was capable of knowing God and therefore of eternal life. Such seems the simple natural interpretation of the words. It is not to be wondered at, perhaps, that the same dogmatic prepossessions which led men to explain away the true meaning of Christ's preaching to "the spirits in prison," should have biassed them here also, and that the same school of interpreters should have taken the "dead" as meaning "dead in trespasses and sins," and referred the "preaching of the Gospel" to the work of the Apostles, and the "judgment according to men" to their sufferings on earth.

7. *But the end of all things is at hand*] The words are spoken, as are nearly all the eschatological utterances of the New Testament, within the horizon of the Apostle's knowledge, and it had not been

sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all *things* have 8

given to him to know the "times and the seasons" (Acts i. 7). His language was the natural inference from our Lord's words, "then shall the end be" (Matt. xxiv. 6—14). The times in which the disciples lived were to them the "last times" (1 Tim. iv. 1; 1 John ii. 18). They looked for the coming of the Lord as not far off (Rom. xiii. 12; James v. 8). They expected to be among those who should be living when He came (1 Cor. xv. 51), who should be caught up to meet Him in the air (1 Thess. iv. 17). A few years—we might almost say, looking to 2 Pet. iii. 8, a few months—sufficed to shew that the divine plan extended over a wider range than their thoughts and expectations. And yet, in one very real sense, they were not altogether mistaken. The end of all that they had known and lived in, the end of one great æon, or dispensation, was indeed nigh at hand. The old order was changing and giving place to the new. There was to be a great removal of the things that were shaken, that had decayed and waxed old, that the things that could not be shaken might remain (Hebr. xii. 27).

be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer] The first of the two verbs is defined by Greek ethical writers (Aristotle, *Eth. Nicom.* II. 2) as implying the harmony of affections and desires with reason. Of the two English words "sober" or **temperate**, by which it is commonly rendered, the latter, as expressing the due control of passions, is the more adequate. The Vulgate gives "*Estote prudentes*," but that adjective belongs to another Greek ethical term. Mark v. 15, Rom. xii. 3, 2 Cor. v. 13, may be noticed as among the other passages in which the same verb occurs. Strictly speaking, indeed, the word "sober" is wanted instead of "watch" for the second verb, which implies in the strictest sense "abstinence from wine and strong drink." The word commonly translated "watch" (Matt. xxiv. 42, 43, xxvi. 38—41) is altogether different. It may be noticed that the tense of the two verbs in the original implies not a general precept, but a call to an immediate act. The words of St Peter present a singular contrast to the effect that has commonly been produced in later ages by the belief that the end of the world was near. Terror and alarm, the abandonment of earthly callings and social duties accompanied that belief in the tenth century, when kings left their thrones and sought the seclusion of the monastery, "*appropinquante fine saeculi*," and a like agitation has accompanied it since. To the Apostle's mind the approach of the end of all things is a motive for calmness and self-control. He seems almost to reproduce the thought of a poet of whom he had probably never heard,

> [Si fractus illabatur orbis
> Impavidum ferient ruinae.]
> "Should the world's ruins round him break
> His confidence it will not shake;
> Unmoved he bears it all."
> (Hor. *Od.* III. 3. 7.)

fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall
9 cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to

The "calmness" of the Apostle differs, however, from that of the philosopher. It is not merely the self-command of one who has conquered. Men are to be sober with a view to prayer. Desires of all kinds, above all, those of man's lower nature, are fatal to the energy and therefore to the efficacy of prayer.

8. *And above all things have fervent charity*] It is to be regretted that the unintelligent desire for variation which the translators of 1611 took almost as their guiding principle, and in this instance, perhaps, their fondness for current theological terms, should have led them to obscure the unity of Apostolic teaching by using the word "charity" instead of "love." The use of the same word in 1 Cor. xiii. helps us indeed to perceive the agreement of St Peter and St Paul, but we lose sight of the harmony between their teaching and that of St John. On the general precept and on the word "fervent" see note on chapter i. 22.

for charity shall cover the multitude of sins] The words are probably a quotation from Prov. x. 12, where our English version, following the Hebrew, gives "Hatred stirreth up strife, but love covereth all sins." It may be noted, however, that the LXX. version gives here an entirely different rendering, "Friendship covers all those who are not lovers of contention," and that St Peter, though he commonly uses the LXX., must, in this instance, either have translated from the Hebrew, or, as seems more probable, have quoted the maxim as a current proverb. The use of the same phrase in James v. 20, "He that converteth the sinner.....shall hide a multitude of sins," shews that the thought and the language were common to the two teachers. There remains the question, What is the meaning of the proverb? Whose are the sins that fervent love or charity will cover? (1) As the words meet us in Prov. x. 12, the context determines its meaning, "Love covers (i.e. forgives, and does not expose) the sins of others," and so it is contrasted with the "hatred which stirs up strife." (2) This may be the meaning here, "Love one another, for so only can you forgive freely as you are taught to do." If we adopt this view, or so far as we adopt it, we can scarcely fail to connect it with the lesson which St Peter had once needed, as to the limit, or rather the non-limitation, of forgiveness. His "multitude of sins" is the equivalent of the "seventy times seven" of our Lord's teaching (Matt. xviii. 22). (3) It lies in the nature of the case, however, that a maxim such as this should present different aspects. In James v. 20, e.g., the words "hide a multitude of sins" are equivalent not to forgiving sins ourselves, but to winning God's forgiveness for them. And looking to the connexion between loving and being forgiven in Luke vii. 47, we shall not be far wrong if we include that thought also as within the scope of the Apostle's words, "Love above all things, for that will enable you to forgive others, and in so doing ye will fulfil the condition of being forgiven yourselves." So taken, the proverb reminds us in its width of the familiar,

another without grudging. As every man hath received *the* 10
gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stew-

> "The quality of mercy...is twice blest;
> It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

9. *Use hospitality one to another without grudging*] Literally, **Be hospitable.** The stress laid on this virtue in the New Testament, as in 1 Tim. iii. 2; Rom. xii. 13; Heb. xiii. 2, brings before us some of the more striking features of the social life of the Christians of the first three centuries. The Christian traveller coming to a strange city was in a position of no little difficulty. The houses of heathen friends, if he had any, were likely to bring trials of one kind or another. He might be taunted and persecuted for his faith or tempted to "run to the same excess of riot with them." Inns presented too often scenes of drunkenness and impurity, foul words and fouler acts. It was therefore an unspeakable gain for such an one to know that he could find shelter in a Christian home. The fact that he was a Christian, that he brought with him some "letter of commendation" (2 Cor. iii. 1) as a safeguard against imposture, was to be enough to secure a welcome. It lay in the nature of things that sometimes strangers might thus present themselves with inconvenient frequency or under inconvenient conditions, and therefore St Peter adds "be hospitable...without murmurings." Men were not to look on it as a trouble or a nuisance, or think themselves hardly treated. They might be entertaining angels unawares (Heb. xiii. 2). Here also God loved a cheerful giver (2 Cor. ix. 7).

10. *As every man hath received the gift*] The two verses remind us of the like precepts in Rom. xii. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 4, 28. The tense of the Greek verb ("as every man *received* the gift") implies the thought that the gift came at a definite moment, probably at that of the laying on of hands. Comp. Acts xix. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 14. The words "As every man received" may be equivalent to "Let every man use his gift according to its nature or purpose," which agrees best with Rom. xii. 6, or they may, more probably, be an echo of the "freely ye received, freely give" of Matt. x. 8.

even so minister the same one to another] The Greek verb means something more than "use" or "administer." It implies that men were to see in the gifts they possessed no ground for boasting, but only a call to more lowly service. They were to be, as in the next clause, "stewards" of those gifts. The thought that men are stewards, not possessors, of what God has given them in their outward or their inward life was, of course, a natural one (1 Cor. iv. 1; Tit. i. 7), but here we can scarcely fail to recognise an echo of our Lord's teaching. Peter had heard the parable of the steward who "wasted his lord's goods" (Luke xvi. 1—12) and his Lord's question, Who then is the faithful and wise steward? (Luke xii. 42). In the "manifold," or better, perhaps, **varied** grace of God, we have implied a much greater diversity of gifts, such as we find in 1 Cor. xii. 8—10, Eph. iv. 11, than those which the Apostle specifies. He confines himself, indeed, to the one broad division

11 ards of the manifold grace of God. If any *man* speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any *man* minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all *things* may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

between the gifts that shewed themselves in speech and those that shewed themselves in act.

11. *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God*] The words cover the gifts of tongues, prophecy, teaching, knowledge, counsel, in St Paul's fuller classification (Rom. xii. 6—8; 1 Cor. xii.—xiv.). These gifts, St Peter teaches, were only used rightly when the speaker's utterances were in harmony with what were already recognised as "oracles of God." The word is used of Old Testament revelations in Acts vii. 38; Rom. iii. 2, but we may think of it as including also those made through the prophets and teachers of the Christian Church. The fact that Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, who came within the circle of Apostolical teaching, wrote a book on the *Oracles of the Lord Jesus* (Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.*, III. 39), makes it probable that St Peter included our Lord's teaching, possibly also the Epistles of St Paul, which he speaks of as "Scripture" (2 Pet. iii. 16), under this title. The essential unity of Apostolic teaching was not to be disturbed by private eccentricities of interpretation or theoretical speculation.

if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth] The ministering here spoken of (*diakonein*) can hardly be limited to the special work of those who bore the name of "minister" or "deacon" as a title of office, but takes in all works of ministration in act as distinct from teaching, visiting the sick and needy, teaching children, helping those that were in trouble. Men were to set about that work also as stewards of a gift. The strength to work for others was not their own but was supplied by God. The word for "giveth," used by St Paul in 2 Cor. ix. 10, and again in a compound form by St Peter in 2 Pet. i. 5, had, as its primary meaning in Classical Greek, that of defraying the expense of a chorus in the performance of a drama. As this took its place among the more munificent acts of a citizen's social life, the verb came to be connected with the general idea of large or liberal giving, and was used in that sense long after the original association had died out of it.

that God in all things may be glorified] This is pointed out as the end to be aimed at in the use of all gifts whether of speech or action. In so teaching, St Peter was but reproducing what he had heard from his Lord's lips, "that men may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven" (Matt. v. 16), perhaps also what he had read in St Paul's Epistles, that men should "do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. x. 31).

to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen] It was but natural with St Peter, as with St Paul, that the thought of "glorifying" should be followed up by the utterance of a doxology. For "praise" it

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial 12
which is to try you, as though *some* strange *thing* happened
unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of 13
Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed,

would be better to read **glory** as expressing the sequence of thought more clearly, and instead of "for ever and ever," **for ages of ages.** It may be noted, as probable evidence that the Apostle is using a liturgical formula, that precisely the same combination is used by St John in Rev. i. 6, and is found also, in a fuller form, in Rev. v. 13. The use of the *Amen* (from the Hebrew for "fixed, settled, true," and so meaning "verily,") as commonly in the Gospels,—confirms this view. It was as in Rom. i. 25, ix. 5, 1 Cor. xiv. 16, the natural close of a liturgical utterance of belief or adoration.

12. *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you*] More literally, **be not amazed** (see, for the word, notes on verse 4) **at the burning fire among you that comes to you as a test.** The "burning fire" (the word is used literally in Rev. xviii. 9, 18) is, of course, the symbol, as in chap. i. 7, of afflictions and persecutions. The mind of the Apostle once more goes back to these afflictions, as before in chap. i. 6, 7, ii. 19—21, iii. 15—17. He meets the terror which they were likely to cause by the thought that all this was to be expected. Men were to enter into the kingdom of God "through much tribulation" (Acts xiv. 22). All "they that would live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution" (2 Tim. iii. 12). The strange thing would be if it were otherwise. And so the Apostle repeats his "think it not strange," **be not amazed,** as the secret of calm endurance. It was for him and those to whom he wrote what the *Nil admirari* was for the Epicurean poet (Hor. *Epp.* I. 6). As before, he dwells on the leading character of suffering. It tries faith, and the faith which endures is stronger and purer for the process.

13. *but rejoice*] The words of the beatitude of Matt. v. 12 come back upon the Apostle's mind, and are reproduced as from his own personal experience. When he had first heard them, he may well have counted them a strange thing. Now he has tried and proved their truth.

inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings] The Greek conjunction expresses more than the ground of the joy. Men are to rejoice **in proportion as** they are sharers in the sufferings of Christ. On the thought of this intercommunion in suffering between Christ and His people, see note on chap. i. 11. Here "the sufferings of Christ" are those which He endured while on earth, those also which He endures now as the Head of His body, the Church, in His infinite sympathy with each individual member. Each faithful sufferer, accordingly, in proportion to the measure of his sufferings, becomes *ipso facto* a sharer in those of Christ. He fills up, in St Paul's bold language, "what was lacking in the sufferings of Christ" (Col. i. 24).

that, when his glory shall be revealed] The thought is again closely parallel to that of chap. i. 11. Literally the words run, **in the revelation of His glory.** As thought of by the Apostles, the "revela-

14 ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye;* for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glo-

tion of Christ" is identical with His coming to judge the quick and dead (Luke xvii. 30). The precise phrase "the revelation of His glory" is not found elsewhere, but it has an analogue in "the throne of His glory" in Matt. xxv. 31.

14. *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ*] Literally, **in the name of Christ.** As in chap. iii. 14, "If ye suffer for righteousness' sake," we found an echo of one beatitude (Matt. v. 10), so in this we have the counterpart of the more personal "for my sake" of Matt. v. 11. It would be better, as indicating the reference to the beatitudes, to render the adjective by **blessed** rather than **happy.**

the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you] The English version is tenable, but the construction of the sentence is peculiar and admits of a different rendering, "the **principle** or **element** of **glory**, and the spirit of God, resteth on you." In either case what is emphasized is the fact that the outward reviling to which the disciples were exposed brought glory and not dishonour. The Spirit of Glory was there—who has glory as His essential attribute—and that Spirit was none other than the very Spirit of God. Looking to the connexion between the "glory" of the Shechinah-cloud which was the witness of the Divine Presence, and that which dwelt in Christ as the only-begotten of the Father (John i. 14), it is possible that the words "the Spirit of Glory" may be equivalent to the "Spirit of Christ." The use of the word for "rest" throws us back upon the occurrence of the same verb in the LXX. version of Num. xi. 25, 2 Kings ii. 15. The thought of the Apostle, in this respect true to his citation from Joel ii. in Acts ii. 16—18, is that the humblest sufferers for the name of Christ are as truly sharers in the gift of the Eternal Spirit as were the greatest prophets. It "rests" on them—not coming and going, in fitful movements, or extraordinary manifestations, but dwelling with them continually.

on their part he is evil spoken of] It is remarkable that the whole of this clause is omitted in many of the best MSS. and versions, including the Sinaitic. On the assumption to which this fact has led most recent Editors, that it was not part of the original text, we must think of it either as a marginal note that has found its way into the text, or, as an addition made in a second transcript of the Epistle by the writer himself. Here the word for "is evil spoken of" would rightly be rendered as **blasphemed,** and "Christ" or "the Spirit of God" must be taken as the subject of the sentence. In this case, that of suffering for the truth, the very blasphemies which men utter in their rage, are a witness to the effective work which has been done through the power of the Spirit, and in respect of those who suffer, are working for His glory. Appalling as is the contrast between the blasphemy of the persecutors and the doxologies of the sufferer, the one is almost the necessary complement of the other.

rified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* 15
a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's
matters. Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not 16

15. *But let none of you suffer as a murderer*] Literally, **For let none of you suffer.** The implied sequence of thought would seem to be this: "I bid you suffer for the name of Christ and remind you of the blessing which attaches to such suffering, for the last thing I should wish is that you should think that it is the suffering, not the cause, that makes the martyr." He represses the tendency, more or less prevalent in all times of persecution, whether of Christians by heathens, or of one body of Christians by another, which leads men to pose in the attitude of martyrs and confessors when they ought rather to be classed with ordinary criminals suffering the just punishment of their crimes.

Of the four forms of evils named, the first and second require no explanation. The third includes all other forms of evil which came under the cognizance of law, as in the "malefactor" of John xviii. 30. Comp. 1 Pet. ii. 12—14. The fourth is a word which is not found elsewhere and may possibly have been coined by St Peter. Literally, the word (*allotrio-episcopos*) describes one who claims an authority like that of a bishop or superintendent in a region in which he has no right to exercise it. As such it might, of course, be applied to the schismatic self-appointed teacher, and "a bishop in another man's diocese," though too modern in its associations, would be a fair equivalent for it. Such an one, however, would hardly be singled out for punishment by a heathen persecutor, and we must therefore think of the word as describing a like character in another sphere of action. It was, perhaps, a natural consequence of the higher standard of morals which the Christian disciple possessed, or imagined himself to possess, that he should be tempted to interfere with the action of public or private men when he thought them wrong, intermeddling in season or out of season. Such a man might easily incur the penalties which attach to what, in modern language, we call "contempt of court," or "obstruction of justice." If a passing word of controversial application be allowable in a Commentary we may note the reproduction of the character of the *allotrio-episcopos* (1) in the permanent policy of those who claim to be the successors of St Peter, and (2) in the meddling fussiness which leads laymen, or clergy, to interfere in matters which properly belong to the office of a Bishop, or to the jurisdiction of an authorized tribunal.

16. *Yet if any man suffer as a Christian*] The occurrence of a name which has played so prominent a part in the history of mankind requires a few words of notice. It did not originate with the followers of Christ themselves. They spoke of themselves as the "brethren" (Acts xiv. 2, xv. 1, 3, 22, &c.), as "the saints," i.e. the holy or consecrated people (Matt. xxvii. 52; Acts ix. 13, 32; Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. vi. 1; Eph. i. 1, &c.), as "those of the way," i.e. those who took their own way, the way which they believed would lead them to eternal life (Acts ix. 2, xix. 9, xxiv. 22). By their Jewish opponents they were

17 be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For
the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of
God: and if *it* first *begin* at us, what *shall* the end *be* of
18 them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the

commonly stigmatized as "the Nazarenes" (Acts xxiv. 5), the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, the city out of which no good thing could come (John i. 46). The new name was given first at Antioch (Acts xi. 26), shortly after the admission there, on a wider scale than elsewhere, of Gentile converts. Its Latin form, analogous to that of *Pompeiani*, *Mariani*, for the followers of Pompeius or Marius, indicated that the new society was attracting the attention of official persons and others at Antioch. The word naturally found acceptance. It expressed a fact, it was not offensive, and it might be used by those who, like Agrippa, though they were not believers themselves, wished to speak respectfully of those who were (Acts xxvi. 28). Soon it came to be claimed by those believers. The question, Are you a Christian? became the crucial test of their faith. By disowning it, as in the case of the mildly repressive measures taken in these very regions by Pliny in the reign of Trajan, they might purchase safety (Pliny, *Epp.* x. 96). The words now before us probably did much to stamp it on the history of the Church. Men dared not disown it. They came to exult in it. Somewhat later on they came to find in it, with a pardonable play upon words, a new significance. The term *Christiani* (=followers of Christ) was commonly pronounced *Chrestiani*, and that, they urged, shewed that they were followers of *Chrestus*, i.e. of the good and gentle one. Their very name, they urged, through their Apologist, Tertullian (*Apol.* I. 3), was a witness to the falsehood of the charges brought against them.

on this behalf] Better, perhaps, **in this point**, or **this particular.** Many of the best MSS. give, however, **in this name**, i.e. either the name of Christ, for whom they suffered, or that of Christian, which was the occasion of their suffering.

17. *For the time is come that judgment must begin*] Literally, **It is the season of the beginning of the judgment.** The words of the Apostle stand in close connexion with his belief that he was living in the last age of the world, that "the end of all things was at hand." (See note on verse 7.) He saw in the persecutions and sufferings that fell on the Church, beginning "from the house of God," the opening of that judgment. It was not necessarily a work of condemnation. Those on whom it fell might be judged in order that they might not be condemned (comp. 1 Cor. xi. 32). But it was a time which, like the final judgment, was one of separation. It was trying the reality of the faith of those who professed to believe in Christ, and dividing the true disciples from the hypocrites and half-hearted. The "house of God" is His family, His *Ecclesia*, as in 1 Tim. iii. 15, and the "spiritual house" of chap. ii. 5.

what shall the end be of them that obey not] The *à fortiori* argument reminds us in some measure of that of St Paul, "If God spared

righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them 19
that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee" (Rom. xi. 21). There, however, the contrast lay between Israel after the flesh that was rejected for its unfaithfulness and the new Israel after the spirit if it too should prove unfaithful. Here it lies between the true Israel of God and the outlying heathen world. With a question which is more awful than any assertion, he asks, as to those that obey not, What shall be their end? The thought was natural enough to have been quite spontaneous, but it may also have been the echo of like thoughts that had passed through the minds of the older prophets. "I begin to bring evil upon the city which is called by my Name, and shall ye"—the nations of the heathen—"be utterly unpunished?" Jer. xxv. 29. Comp. also Jer. xlix. 12; Ezek. ix. 6.

18. *And if the righteous scarcely be saved*] Once more we have a passage from the Old Testament (Prov. xi. 31) without any formula of quotation. In this instance the Apostle quotes from the LXX. version, though it is hardly more than an inaccurate paraphrase of the Hebrew, which runs "the righteous shall be requited" (the word may mean "punished") "upon earth, much more the ungodly and the sinner." St Peter, following the LXX., omits the words "upon earth," which limit the application of the proverb to temporal chastisements; but it is obvious, as he is speaking primarily of the fiery trial of persecution, that he includes these as well as the issue of the final judgment. A time of "great tribulation," such as Christ had foretold, was coming on the earth, in which, but for the elect's sake, "no flesh should be saved" (Matt. xxiv. 22). The "un-godly" and the "sinner" correspond to "those that obey not" in the previous verse, the former pointing to sins against God, the latter to sins against man.

19. *Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God*] In the acceptance of sufferings as being according to the will of God, much more is meant than the mere submission to an inevitable destiny. If we really think of pain and persecution as working out God's will, permitted and controlled by Him, we know that that Will is righteous and loving; planning nothing less than our completeness in holiness (1 Thess. iv. 3), the Will of which we daily pray that it may be done on earth as it is in heaven. The Greek word for "Creator" is not found elsewhere in the New Testament, but is found in the LXX. of Judith ix. 12, 2 Macc. i. 24. Stress is laid on the attribute, or act, of creation as the ground of confidence. He who made the soul is also He who hateth nothing that He hath made. Here, also, we can scarcely doubt the example of the Great Sufferer was present to the Apostle's mind, and his words were therefore echoes of those spoken on the Cross, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke xxiii. 46).

5 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also
an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also
2 a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock

CHAPTER V.

1. *The elders which are among you*] Some of the better MSS. present the reading **The elders therefore among you.** If we adopt this reading we have the latent sequence of thought in the idea suggested by the word "well-doing" in chap. iv. 19, or by the "judgment" of chap. iv. 17. The work of the elders was to be directed to strengthen men in the one, to prepare them for the other. It is obvious that the Apostle addresses those who are "elders" in the special sense of the word, as in Acts xi. 30, xv. 22, xx. 17. The last passage shews, as compared with Acts xx. 28, that the term was interchangeable with "Bishops." See also Tit. i. 5, 7, and the notes on verse 2.

who am also an elder] If the word was used in its official sense in the first clause it cannot well be taken in any other sense here. The Apostle, with a profound humility, strikingly in contrast with the supremacy claimed by his successors, puts himself, as a *fellow elder*, on a level with the elders to whom he writes, with duties to be fulfilled in the same spirit, subject to the same conditions.

a witness of the sufferings of Christ] The words bring out the one point on which he lays stress as distinguishing himself from others. He was in a special sense a "witness" of the actual sufferings of the man Christ Jesus (Acts i. 8—22, xiii. 31), while they were partakers of those sufferings as reproduced in the experience of His people. As in chap. i. 11, iv. 13, the thought of those sufferings leads, in immediate sequence, to that of the glory which is their ultimate issue. The Greek word for "partaker" (literally, **a joint partaker, a fellow-sharer with you**) implies that he is, as before, dwelling on what he has in common with those to whom he writes (comp. Phil. i. 7). Some interpreters of note have seen, even in the description which he gives of himself as a "witness," not that which was distinctive, but the work which he had in common with others, of bearing his testimony that Christ had suffered, and that His servants also must therefore expect suffering.

2. *feed the flock of God*] The word for "feed," here as elsewhere, implies the whole work of the shepherd—guiding, directing, protecting, as well as supplying food (comp. Luke xvii. 7; John xxi. 16; Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. ix. 7). The shepherd's work had been from a very early period a parable of that of rulers and of teachers. Kings were to Homer the "shepherds of the people" (ποίμενες λαῶν). David was taken from the sheepfold to feed Israel as the flock of Jehovah (Ps. lxxviii. 70, 71). The sin of the kings and rulers of Judah had been that they did not feed the flock, but scattered and destroyed it (Jer. xxiii. 1—4; Ezek. xxxiv. 2—31). In St Peter's use of the word we note a reproduction of the words that had fallen on his ears with a three-fold, yet varied, iteration, "Feed my sheep" (John xxi. 16). The comprehensiveness of the word must not be lost sight of. It includes more than preaching or teaching, and takes in the varied duties of what we

of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a

rightly call the pastoral office. In the words "the flock of God" men are tacitly reminded who is the Chief Shepherd whom they serve, and to whom they will have to render an account (comp. Acts xx. 28). It may be noted as a characteristic difference that in the Old Testament the shepherds of the people are always the civil rulers of the nation (e. g. Ps. lxxviii. 71; Ezek. xxxiv. 2), while in the New that thought falls into the background, and the shepherd of the flock is its spiritual guide and teacher.

taking the oversight thereof] The first three words are the English equivalent of the Greek participle of the verb formed from *Episcopos*, the "bishop," or "overseer" of the Church. In its being thus used to describe the office of the elders of the Church we have a close parallel to St Paul's addressing the "elders" of the Church as being also "overseers" (Acts xx. 28). The two terms were in fact interchangeable, and what is now the higher office of the Bishop in relation to the Presbyters was discharged by the Apostle or his personal representative.

not by constraint, but willingly] The words that follow indicate the three great conditions of true pastoral work. (1) It must not be entered on reluctantly and as under pressure. In one sense indeed the truest and best work may be done by one who feels, as St Paul felt, that a "necessity is laid" upon him (1 Cor. ix. 16), but there the necessity was that of a motive essentially spiritual. What St Peter deprecates is the drawing back from the labour and responsibility of the care of souls. The *Nolo episcopari*, which has been so often the formula of the pride or the sloth that apes humility, would have been in his eyes the sign of cowardice and weakness. Here, as in other things, the true temper is that of cheerful and willing service. The history of the Church presents, it is true, not a few instances, among which Chrysostom and Ambrose are pre-eminent, of the pastoral and episcopal office being forced upon a reluctant acceptance, but in such cases the reluctance left no trace in the after life. The work once entered on was done "willingly," not as a forced and constrained service. It may be noted that the memorable treatise of Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood*, is in its form an *apologia* for his unwillingness to enter on the priestly office on the ground of its infinite dangers and responsibilities. Some of the better MSS. add the words "according to God," to "willingly," the phrase having the same meaning ("according to the will of God,") as in chap. iv. 6, 2 Cor. vii. 9, 10.

not for filthy lucre] The adverb is not found elsewhere in the New Testament. The corresponding adjective meets us in 1 Tim. iii. 3, 8, Tit. i. 7. The words are interesting as shewing that even in the troubled times in which St Peter wrote there was enough wealth in the Church to make the position of a Bishop-presbyter a lucrative one. There was the double stipend for those who were both pastors and preachers (1 Tim. v. 17). There was, for baser natures, the temptation of using spiritual influence for secular ends, "devouring widows' houses," as the Pharisees did in Judæa (Matt. xxiii. 14), "leading captive silly women," as did

3 ready mind; neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but
4 being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shep-

the false teachers at Ephesus (2 Tim. iii. 6) and Crete (Tit. i. 11). It may be noted that the term which both the Apostles use of the man who enters on the work of the ministry of souls from such a motive, is one which Greek writers commonly use of one who seeks gain in base and sordid ways. In their eyes the calling of a presbyter might be made, so followed, as disreputable an occupation as that of the usurer, or the pander, or the slave-dealer. In contrast with this temper, eagerly catching at emoluments, the Apostle points to the cheerful readiness that seeks eagerly for work.

3. *neither as being lords over God's heritage*] Better, **not lording it over the heritages.** There is no word in the Greek answering to "God's," and it is not wanted to complete the sense. The word for "lording" implies an authority exercised both wrongfully and oppressively. Ambition, the love of power for the sake of power, is, from the Apostle's standpoint, as great a hindrance to true pastoral work as avarice. The whole history of the Church, in particular the history of the papacy, as e.g. in the history of Gregory VII., shews how fatally it has worked on souls that had conquered, or had never known, the baser temptation. Warnings against such ambition we find again and again in our Lord's teaching (Matt. xx. 25—28; Luke xxii. 24—26; Mark ix. 34, 35). A memorable picture of the working of such a temper in St Paul's rivals at Corinth meets us in 2 Cor. xii. 20.

The word for "heritages" (the Greek noun (κλῆρος) is in the plural) means primarily a "lot;" then, as in Deut. x. 9, xii. 12, the "portion assigned by lot." So Jehovah is said to be the "portion" or "heritage" of the Levites (Deut. x. 9). Here the idea would seem to be that each separate *ecclesia* was thought of as the "portion" of the presbyter who watched over it. The later history of the word presents a curious series of transitions. (1) From the congregations it was transferred to the presbyters, as being, it was supposed, in a special sense, the "portion" or "heritage" of God. They accordingly were described as the *clerus*, the *clerici*, of the Church, and hence we get the common words, "clergy," and "clerical." (2) From the educational superiority of the clerical order in the Middle Ages, the word came to be applied to any person of a higher than average culture. So Chaucer speaks of Homer as a "great clerke," and the legal phrase "benefit of clergy" retains a trace of the same meaning. (3) From this elevation it has come to be applied, as by a *facilis descensus*, to the lower forms of culture, and the "parish clerk" and the copying "clerk" at his desk, present the fallen greatness of the word that was once so noble.

but being ensamples to the flock] Comp. the word and the thought in 2 Thess. iii. 9 and Phil. iii. 17. It is obvious that the teaching of the verse does not condemn the exercise of all spiritual authority as such, but only its excesses and abuses; but in doing this, it points out also that the influence of example is more powerful than any authority, and to seek after that influence is the best safeguard against the abuse of power.

herd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, *ye* younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another,

4. *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear*] The word for "chief Shepherd" is not found elsewhere, and would seem therefore to have been coined by St Peter, to express the thought which had been impressed on his mind by his Lord's words, "I am the good Shepherd" (John x. 14). In his own work, as in that of all pastors of the Church, he saw the reproduction of that of which Christ had set the great example. For "shall appear" it would be better to read **is manifested.**

a crown of glory that fadeth not away] More accurately, as the Greek has the article, "**the** crown of glory." The four last words answer to the one Greek word, "amaranthine," or "unfading," the adjective being a cognate form of that in chap. i. 4. The crown here is the wreath or chaplet of flowers worn by conquerors and heroes, as in 1 Cor. ix. 25, James i. 12, and differs from the "crowns" or *diadems* of Rev. xii. 3, xix. 12, which were distinctively the badge of sovereignty. It is possible, as the adjective "amaranth" was applied to the kind of flowers which we know as "everlastings," that there may be an allusive reference to the practice of using those flowers for wreaths that were placed in funerals upon the brows of the dead. The word and the thought reappear in one of Milton's noblest passages:

> "Immortal Amaranth, a flower which once
> In Paradise, hard by the tree of life,
> Began to bloom, but soon, for man's offence
> To heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows
> And flowers aloft, shading the fount of life;
> And where the river of bliss through midst of Heaven
> Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream
> With these, that never fade, the spirits elect
> Bind their resplendent locks, inwreathed with beams."
>
> *Paradise Lost*, III. 353—361.

5. *Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder*] The question meets us, whether the words refer to age only, or to office as connected with age. In either case we have, of course, a perfectly adequate meaning. In favour of the latter view we have the facts (1) that in Luke xxii. 26, "he that is younger" in the first clause corresponds to "he that serveth" or "ministereth" in the second; (2) that in Acts v. 6 the term is obviously used of those who were discharging duties like those of the later deacons, sub-deacons or acolytes; (3) that it is hardly likely that the same writer would have used the word "elder" in two different senses in such close juxtaposition. On the whole, therefore, there seems sufficient reason for adopting this view. St Paul's use of the term, however, in the precepts of 1 Tim. v. 1, Tit. ii. 6 is, perhaps, in favour of the other.

Yea, all of you be subject one to another] The words which answer to

and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the
6 proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble
yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he
7 may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him;

"be subject" are wanting in some of the best MSS. and have the character of an insertion made to complete the sense. If we omit the participle, the words "all of you, one to another" may be taken either with the clause that precedes or with that which follows.

be clothed with humility] The Greek verb (ἐγκομβώσασθε) for "clothe yourselves" has a somewhat interesting history. The noun from which it is derived (κόμβος) signifies a "knot." Hence the verb means "to tie on with a knot," and from the verb another noun is formed (ἐγκομβῶμα), denoting a garment so tied on. This, according to its quality, might be the outer "over-all" cloak of slaves, or the costly mantle of princes. The word may have well been chosen for the sake of some of the associations which this its history suggests. Men were to clothe themselves with lowliness of mind, to fasten it tight round them like a garment, so that it might never fall away (comp. the same thought as applied to hatred in Ps. cix. 17, 18), and this was to be worn, as it were, over all other virtues, half-concealing, half-sheltering them. It might present, from one point of view, the aspect of servitude. It was, in reality, a raiment more glorious than that of kings (Acts xii. 21), or those who live in kings' houses (Matt. xi. 8). In the case of slaves, probably in all cases, the garment so named was white. (Poll. *Onomast.* IV. 119.) This also probably was not without a suggestive significance. In Col. iii. 12 we have, though not the word, a thought very closely parallel.

for God resisteth the proud] We have here another passage quoted from the Old Testament (Prov. iii 34, from the LXX. version with "God" substituted for "the Lord") without the formula of quotation. It is interesting (1) as taking its place in the list of passages from the Book of Proverbs, which St Peter quotes both in the First and Second Epistles; and (2) as being quoted also by St James (iv. 6). The parallelism which we have already traced between the two writers (see notes on chap. i. 6, 7, 24) makes it probable that St Peter may have derived his quotation from his brother Apostle of the circumcision. In James iv. 6 the promise is cited with more special reference to the grace which gives men strength for the combat against evil, here in its wider and more general aspect.

6. *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God*] The parallelism with St James (iv. 10) will again be noticed, but the thought is one which occurs in many forms elsewhere (Job xxii. 29; Prov. xxix. 23; Matt. xxiii. 12; Luke i. 52, xiv. 11, xviii. 14). The plural "the mighty hand of God," reproduces the LXX. version of Deut. iii. 24.

in due time] The promise is purposely left in this vague indeterminate form. St Peter does not say that the exaltation of victory will come in this life. He does not say either, that it will not come till the Resurrection. He is certain, with the full assurance of faith, that this is God's

for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your 8
adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking
whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith, 9

law of retribution, and he is content to leave "the times and the seasons" in the Father's hands, certain that the season chosen will be the right one.

7. *casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you*] The English version effaces a distinction in the Greek, the first word for "care" implying "distracting anxiety," as in Matt. xiii. 22; Mark iv. 19; Luke viii. 14, xxi. 34, the latter conveying the idea simply of the care that foresees and provides, as in Mark iv. 38; John x. 13, xii. 6. The thought expressed is accordingly that our anxiety is to be swallowed up in our trust in the loving Providence of the Father. Here again we have a quotation somewhat altered from the LXX. version (Ps. lv. 22), "Cast thy care upon the Lord and he shall nourish thee," and in the warning against anxiety we may find an echo of the precepts against "taking thought" (where the Greek verb is formed from the same noun) in Matt. vi. 25—34.

8. *Be sober, be vigilant*] The two words are found in a like juxtaposition in 1 Thess. v. 6. The tense used here implies an immediate act, as though he said, "Rouse yourselves to sobriety and watchfulness," rather than a continuous state. The first word has the strict meaning of abstinence from that which inebriates. See note on chap. iv. 7.

because your adversary the devil] The word for "adversary" is the same as that used in Matt. v. 25, and carries with it the sense of a plaintiff or accuser in a trial before a judge. The Greek word for "devil' (διάβολος), uniformly used in the LXX. for the Hebrew "Satan," expresses the same thought, with the implied addition that the charge is false and calumnious. The comparison with the lion has its starting-point, perhaps, in Isai. xxxviii. 13, where, however, it is used of God as visiting men with pain and sickness; or Ps. xxii. 21, where its use is more closely parallel with the present passage. The use of the same verb for "roaring" in the LXX. of Ps. xxii. 13 confirms the inference that that Psalm—the first words of which, it will be remembered, had been uttered by our Lord upon the cross—was present to St Peter's mind. The word for "devour," literally, **gulp down** or **swallow**, implies the thought of total destruction. It is probable, wide and general as the words are in themselves, that the special form of attack of which the Apostle thought was that of the persecution then raging, and of which, though human agents were prominent in it, Satan was regarded as the real instigator. Comp. 2 Tim. iv. 17. When Christ is named as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. v. 5) we may probably see the suggested thought that in the conflict which His followers have to wage they have with them One who is stronger than their adversary.

9. *whom resist stedfast in the faith*] The word for "resist" is the same as that used in the parallel passage of James iv. 7. "Faith" is probably used in its subjective rather than its objective sense, for un-

knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your
10 brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace,
who hath called us into his eternal glory by Christ Jesus,
after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, sta-
11 blish, strengthen, settle *you*. To him *be* glory and dominion
for ever and ever. Amen.

shaken trust in God rather than unwavering orthodoxy. Comp. the "shield of faith" in Eph. vi. 16.

knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren] Better, **that the same sufferings** (as keeping up the continuity of thought with chaps. i. 11, iv. 13, v. 1) **are being wrought out for your brotherhood** (the same collective term as in chap. ii. 17) **that are in the world.** The Apostle appeals to the thought of sympathy with other sufferers as a ground of steadfastness. Those to whom he wrote were not isolated in their afflictions. Far and near there were comrades fighting the same battle. It was at once their duty and their privilege to follow all examples of steadfastness of which they heard elsewhere, and to set that example, so that others, cheered by it, might be strengthened to endure even to the end.

10. *But the God of all grace*] Rather, as there is no implied contrast, "**And** the God of all grace." The epithet, like "the God of all comfort," in 2 Cor. i. 3, implies that God is the Author and Giver of all grace that the child of God needs. In connexion with this attribute of God, there follows the fact that He had called those to whom the Apostle writes to nothing less than a share in His "eternal glory." It may be noted, as bearing on the question as to the authorship of the Second Epistle, that the same description occurs there also (2 Pet. i. 3). But this calling is "in Christ," i.e. not merely by Him as the instrument through whom the call came, but as being "in Him," i.e. by virtue of our union with Him.

after that ye have suffered a while] Literally, **suffered a little**; but the context, contrasting the transient suffering with the eternal glory, as well as the use of the same adverb in chap. i. 6, justifies us in taking the word of time rather than degree.

make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you] The English verb follows the Received Text in taking the Greek verb as optative. Most of the better MSS., however, give the future tense, "*will make you perfect...*," expressing not the prayer of the Apostle, but his firm and steadfast confidence. Each verb has a distinct meaning. That for "make you perfect" implies, as in Matt. iv. 21; Luke vi. 40; 1 Cor. i. 10, restoring to completeness; that for "stablish," as 2 Thess. ii. 17, iii. 3, the fixity of Christians; that for "strengthen" (not found elsewhere in the New Testament) giving power to resist attack. In "settle" (literally, **to lay a foundation**), as in Matt. vii. 25, Luke vi. 48, which may well have been in the Apostle's thoughts, we have the idea of building up the spiritual life upon Christ as the one foundation (1 Cor. iii. 11).

11. *To him be glory and dominion*] The doxology is repeated in

By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I 12

identical terms from chap. iv. 11. Here, as there, it comes as the natural sequel to the thought of what God is and what He has done for His people; and forms the conclusion to the consecutive teaching of the Epistle. It remained only to add a few words of the nature of more personal messages.

12. *By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose*] The Greek order of the words leaves it open whether "to you" is to be construed with "faithful" as in the English version, or with "I have written," the former being, on the whole, preferable. If with the Received Text we admit the article before "faithful," we might translate **the brother who is faithful to you**, but in some of the better MSS. the article is wanting. In any case the way in which Silvanus is mentioned implies that he was already known to the readers of the Epistle. There is no ground for questioning his identity with the "Silas" of Acts xv. 22, 32, 40, the "Silvanus" of 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 19, the second name having probably been taken, after the manner common among Jews (comp. the change from Saul to Paulus, Joshua to Jason, John surnamed Marcus, and other like instances), when he went as a missionary into Gentile countries. It is obvious that the circumstances of his life gave him special qualifications for maintaining or restoring unity of teaching and feeling between the Jewish and Gentile sections of the Church. Trained in the Church of Jerusalem and known as possessing prophetic gifts (Acts xv. 32), he had been chosen, with Barsabas, to be the bearer of the encyclical letter from the Council of Apostles and Elders, and to enforce its purport orally. Throwing himself so heartily into the work of preaching to the Gentiles that he was chosen by St Paul as his companion on his second missionary journey, travelling with him and Timotheus through Galatia, Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth, he was conspicuously fitted to carry on the work which St Paul had begun. The scattered notices above referred to do not carry us further than his work at Corinth, and we are left to conjecture how he had filled up the interval that had elapsed since that date. What we now read suggests (1) that he had been working among the Churches of the provinces of Asia Minor named in chap. i. 1, and had gained their confidence; (2) that after St Paul's final departure from those regions he had turned to St Peter as still within reach, and had brought under his notice the sufferings of the Christians there; and (3) that he was sent back with the Epistle that was to guide and comfort them. It is a probable conjecture that St Peter may have received from him copies of the Epistles of St Paul to which he refers in 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16. The Greek verb for "I have written," as being in the epistolary aorist, is rightly taken as referring to this Epistle, and not, as some commentators have thought, to a lost earlier one. The words "by Silvanus" may imply that he was either the amanuensis, or the bearer of the letter, or possibly, that he united the two characters.

as I suppose] The Greek verb (the same as in 1 Cor. iv. 1; 2 Cor. xi. 5) does not carry with it the slight touch of uncertainty which attaches to the common use of the English word.

have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the
13 true grace of God wherein ye stand. The *church that is* at Babylon, elected together with *you*, saluteth you; and *so*

briefly] We may perhaps think of the Apostle as comparing the brevity of what he had written with the longer Epistles of St Paul, such as Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians.

testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand] The words have a special significance as connected with the mission of Silvanus. The great Apostle of the Circumcision, writing to the Churches that had been mainly planted and taught by the Apostle of the Gentiles, bears his full testimony that the "grace" by which they "stand" is no counterfeit, but in very deed a reality. Now, as when he and John and James the brother of the Lord gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship (Gal. ii. 9), he recognises "the grace of God" that had been given to them and through them. The attestation thus given of unbroken harmony stands, it need hardly be said, in singular contrast with the position of antagonism to St Paul and his teaching ascribed to St Peter in the *Clementine Homilies* and *Recognitions*, which represent the later workings of the Judaizing party. See notes on 2 Peter iii. 15.

13. *The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you*] The Greek MSS. (with the notable exception, however, of the Sinaitic), as the italics shew, have no noun corresponding to "church," and it is, at least, a question whether it ought to be inserted, and the same holds good of the pronoun "you." On the one hand there is the consent of many of the early Fathers in favour of the insertion (see next note) and, perhaps, the improbability that a salutation would be sent to the Asiatic Churches from any individual convert in the Church of Babylon. On the other there is the fact (1) that there is no parallel use of the adjective without the noun in this sense in any other passage of the New Testament; (2) that in 2 John 1, which presents the nearest parallel, it is almost certain that the "elect lady," or the "elect Kyria," or the "lady Eclecta" is a person and not a Church; and (3) that if a salutation was sent from "Marcus my son" to the Churches of Asia, there is nothing surprising in a like salutation being sent from another individual disciple. If we adopt, as on the whole, in spite of the weight due to the Sinaitic MS., seems preferable, the latter view, the question who the person was remains open to conjecture. It may have been St Peter's wife who was, as we learn from 1 Cor. ix. 5, the companion of his labours, and in this case there would be a special appropriateness in her sending her greeting in an Epistle which had dwelt so fully on the duties of the female members of the Church (chap. iii. 1—6). It may have been some conspicuous member of the Church of Babylon otherwise unknown to us. The former view seems to have most in its favour.

The further question, what place is meant by Babylon, remains for discussion, and here also we have to note a wide diversity of opinion. On the one hand, Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, and Clement of Alex-

doth Marcus my son. Greet ye one another with a kiss of 14

andria, as reported by Eusebius (*Hist.* II. 15), take the words figuratively, as interpreted by the symbolism of the Apocalypse (Rev. xiv. 8, xviii. 2, 10), for Rome, and this view has naturally been taken by most Romish commentators, who find in this passage a proof, otherwise wanting, as far as the New Testament is concerned, of St Peter's connexion with that Church. Against this it has been urged chiefly, as might be expected, by Protestant interpreters, that there would be something unnatural in the use of a symbolic term belonging to an apocalyptic vision in the simple words of a salutation, and that it was not likely to be intelligible to those who read the Epistle unless they had previously become acquainted with the book in which the symbolism occurs. The order in which the names of the Asiatic provinces are given in chap. i. 1, from East to West, is, though not decisive, yet as far as it goes in favour of the Epistle having been written from the Euphrates rather than the Tiber. There was from the days of the Captivity a large Jewish population residing in the new Babylon which had risen on or near the ruins of the old (Joseph. *Ant.* xv. 2, § 2), and although there had been a massacre of many of these (Josephus, *Ant.* xviii. 9, gives the number as 50,000) in the reign of Claudius, and others had taken refuge first in Ctesiphon and afterwards in Neerda and Nisibis, there may well have been a remnant sufficiently numerous to call for St Peter's attention as the Apostle of the Circumcision. Another Babylon, it should be added, is named by Strabo (B. xvii.) as a military fortress in Egypt, which has been identified by some writers with the modern Cairo, but there are no adequate grounds for assuming that this is the city which St Peter refers to. There is, indeed, no evidence, such as there is in regard to the Euphrates Babylon, that there was either a Jewish population or a Christian Church there.

and so doth Marcus my son] It is natural, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, to assume that the Marcus so named is identical with the "John whose surname was Mark," the son of the Mary to whose house St Peter went on his release from imprisonment (Acts xii. 12), the cousin of Barnabas (Col. iv. 10), the companion of St Paul on his first missionary journey (Acts xiii. 5). On this assumption the term "son" might be used of him either as implying the spiritual parentage of conversion, or as the expression of an affection like that which St Paul cherished for Timotheus (1 Tim. i. 2) and Titus (Tit. i. 4). His presence with St Peter at Babylon when this letter was written, as compared with Col. iv. 10 and 2 Tim. iv. 11, indicates that having gone to Rome during St Paul's first imprisonment, he had then returned to Asia, and had made his way, probably with messages and copies of the later Pauline Epistles, to the Apostle of the Circumcision. When St Paul wrote shortly before his execution, he believed the disciple to be again in Asia. In the traditions of Ecclesiastical history he appears as the "interpreter" of St Peter, writing his Gospel to perpetuate the Apostle's oral teaching, and as the founder of the Church of Alexandria (Euseb. *Hist.* III. 39, Jerome *De Vir. Illust.* c. 8). The view taken by some commentators that the Mark here mentioned was a "son" of the Apostle by natural

charity. Peace *be* with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

parentage cannot, of course, be disproved, but it has absolutely nothing in its favour.

14. *Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity*] Rather, **a kiss of love.** The tense of the Greek verb implies that it was to be done, not as a normal practice of the Church, but as a single act, probably when the Epistle had been read publicly, in token of the unity of feeling among all members of the Church. The practice would seem, from Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Cor. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12, to have been common on such occasions in most of the Churches of the Apostolic age. The separation of the sexes when the Church met for worship, which was probably inherited from the Jewish synagogue, was a safeguard against the scandal which the practice might otherwise have occasioned. In the second or third century the "kiss of peace" became a stereotyped rubric in the Liturgies of the Church, the bishops and priests kissing each other on the cheek, and the laity following their example. Later on, in the thirteenth century, when the sexes were no longer separated, the practice was discontinued, but traces of it still survived in the use of the *Osculatorium*, or kissing token, known as the *Pax* (sometimes a relic, sometimes an ivory or metal tablet with sacred symbols cut on it), which was passed through the congregation, and kissed by each in turn. (Bingham, *Eccl. Ant.* xv. 3. Wetzer und Welte, *Kirchen-Lexikon*, Art. *Friedenskuss*.)

Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus] There is something, perhaps, significant in the fact that while the final benediction of the Apostle of the Gentiles is "Grace be with you all" (Rom. xvi. 24; 1 Cor. xvi. 23; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; and in all his Epistles), that of the Apostle of the Circumcision is the old Hebrew "peace," as in Matt. x. 13, in all the fulness of its meaning.

THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF PETER.

SIMON Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, 1
to them that have obtained like precious faith with us

1. *Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ*] The Greek MSS. for the most part give the less usual form Symeon, which, as applied to St Peter, only meets us elsewhere in Acts xv. 14. The variation may, it is obvious, be looked on from different points of view. On the one hand it may be urged, as against the genuineness of the Epistle, that the same writer would not have been likely to have used two different methods of describing himself, and to have spelt the name which he now uses, and which he had not used in the First Epistle, in a manner different from that which was current in the Gospels, or in the documents from which the Gospels were compiled. On the other hand, it may be urged that the writer of a spurious second letter, referring to the first, as in chap. iii. 1, would not have been likely to put a stumbling-block in the way of the reception of his work by adopting a different form of opening. The most probable supposition is that the change was due to the employment of another amanuensis. It would be natural that Silvanus or Mark, both of whom were with St Peter when the First Epistle was written, should use the more common form, while, if some member of the Church of Jerusalem had been employed for the Second Epistle, it would be equally natural for him to use the form which appears, from Luke ii. 25, Acts xv. 14, to have been current in that city. The name is found, it may be noted, in this form, in the list of St James's successors in the Bishopric of Jerusalem (Euseb. *Hist.* IV. 5). In the combination of "servant" and "apostle," in place of "apostle" only, as in 1 Pet. i. 1, we have a variation to which the remarks just made apply with equal force. A possible explanation, on the one hand, is that the writer of the Epistle (assuming its spuriousness) combined the forms of 1 Pet. i. 1 and Jude ver. 1. A more probable supposition is that the consciousness of addressing a wider circle of readers than those of the *Diaspora*, to whom the First Epistle had been addressed, led the Apostle, in his humility, to follow St Paul's example and to describe himself as "the servant" or *slave* of Christ for the sake of those to whom he wrote (Rom. i. 1; Phil. i. 1; Tit. i. 1).

to them that have obtained like precious faith with us] The Greek

through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus
2 Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through
the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.

adjective rendered "like precious" (literally, **equally precious**) is not found elsewhere in the New Testament. Its use may perhaps be connected with that of the word "precious" in 1 Pet. i. 7, 19. In speaking of "us" the Apostle may either be asserting the full equality of blessedness between the Jews of the *Diaspora* and those of the mother Church of Jerusalem and the personal disciples of the Lord Jesus, or (addressing his Epistle to a wider circle than before, and therefore purposely altering the form of address) between the Gentile and the Jewish converts. They have, he says, "obtained" (the word carries with it the idea of obtaining by lot or by God's appointment as distinct from a man's own exertions, as in Luke i. 9, Acts i. 17) "a faith of equal worth with ours." We ask, In what sense is faith used? Is it objective, faith as the truth which is to be believed, as in Jude ver. 3? or subjective, the faith that justifies and saves? Either meaning is tenable, and probably the Apostle was not careful to distinguish between the two, but the latter commends itself as more in harmony with St Peter's language in Acts xv. 9, where "faith," as given to the Gentiles, is clearly used in its subjective sense.

through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ] Literally, **in** the righteousness. Grammatically, as in Tit. i. 1, the word "God" as well as "Saviour" may be referred to Jesus Christ. It is, however, more consonant with the Apostolic *usus loquendi* (1 Cor. i. 3; 2 Cor. i. 3; Gal. i. 3; Phil. i. 2 et al.) to refer "God," though the word "father" is not joined with it, to the First Person of the Godhead. The "righteousness of God..." may be either (1) that which God gives and which He gives through Christ, or (2) the righteousness which is an eternal attribute of the Godhead. On the former supposition there would, to say the least, be something at variance with the usual language of the New Testament writers in saying that men "obtain faith by righteousness," the usual statement being that "righteousness comes by faith." It seems better, therefore, to take the latter view, and to refer the words to the fact just stated. It was in and by the righteousness of God, the absence in Him of any "respect of persons," that Jew and Gentile had been placed on an equality. So taken the words present a suggestive parallel with Acts x. 34, xv. 8, 9.

2. *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you*] Here the writer falls into the phraseology of the First Epistle (see note on 1 Pet. i. 2), but adds to the simple benediction the words "through (better **in**) the knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord." The word for "knowledge" (*epignosis*) hovers between the meaning of "complete knowledge" and the recognition which implies love. It does not occur in the First Epistle. In St Paul's Epistles it meets us first in Rom. i. 28, iii. 20, and occurs more or less frequently in most of the subsequent Epistles. In 1 Cor. xiii. 8, 12 the verb from which it is formed is contrasted with the less perfect knowledge expressed by *gnosis*. Looking to the history of the words, it would seem probable that in proportion as rash and self-asserting

According as his divine power hath given unto us all 3
things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the
knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:
whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious 4

teaching boasted of the higher *gnosis*, the "science, falsely so called," of 1 Tim. vi. 20, which afterwards developed into the heresies of the *Gnostic* sect, the true teachers set up the other word as expressing something nobler and more excellent. "Not *gnosis*," they seem to say, "but *epignosis*, not an abstract speculative knowledge, but that which implies a fulness of contemplation, loving as well as knowing." St Peter's use of the word in this Epistle, obviously written after closer contact with false teachers of this kind than is traceable in the First, admits, probably, of this explanation.

Jesus our Lord] The peculiar construction, as distinct from "Christ Jesus" and "the Lord Jesus," occurs elsewhere only in Rom. iv. 24.

3. *According as his divine power*] Better, **Seeing that....** The Greek word for "divine" is found elsewhere in the New Testament only in verse 4 and Acts xvii. 29.

life and godliness] The words at first suggest the union of outward and spiritual blessings, the things needful for body and soul. The words that follow shew, however, that "life" must be taken in its higher sense, as extending to the eternal life which "standeth" in the knowledge of God. The word for "godliness" is found elsewhere in the New Testament only in this Epistle (i. 6. 7, iii. 11), and in Acts iii. 12, where it is used by St Peter, and in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. ii. 2, iii. 16, iv. 7, 8, et al.), and like that for "knowledge" in ver. 2 is characteristic of the later period of the Apostolic age. In the LXX. of Prov. i. 7 a kindred word appears as an equivalent for "the fear of the Lord." Its strict meaning is that of "true reverence for God," and so far answers more to "religion" than to "godliness," the state of one who is "godly" or "like God."

through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue] The word for "knowledge" is the same as in ver. 2, and fixes, as has been said, the meaning of "life" in the previous verse. In the last four words the English text mistranslates the preposition, and we have to read "**by** (or **through**) His own glory and virtue." Some MSS. give the simple dative of the instrument (*ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ*), and others the preposition with the genitive (*διὰ δόξης*). For the word "virtue" see note on 1 Pet. ii. 9. Its recurrence three times in this Epistle (here and in verse 5) and so rarely elsewhere in the New Testament (Phil. iv. 8 only) is, so far as it goes, in favour of identity of authorship. Taking the true rendering, the thought expressed is that the attributes of God manifested by Him are the means by which He calls men to the knowledge of the truth

4. *whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises*] Better, the verb being the same as in the previous verse, **through which** (the glory and the virtue just mentioned) **He hath given unto us.** The nature of the promises is indicated by the words that follow. They in-

promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the
5 world through lust: and beside this, giving all diligence,
6 add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to

cluded pardon, peace, eternal life, participation in the Divine Nature. In the word "precious" we note a reproduction of the phraseology of the First Epistle (1 Pet. i. 7, 19), but it should be noted that the apparent parallelism with 1 Pet. ii. 7 is in the English only, and not in the Greek.

that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature] The words seem bold, but they simply shew how deeply St Peter had entered into the meaning of more familiar phrases. If men were "partakers of Christ," brought by His own ordinance into communion and fellowship with Him (1 Cor. i. 9; 2 Cor. i. 7) and with the Father (John xiv. 20—23, xvii. 21—23; 1 John i. 3) and with the Holy Ghost (2 Cor. xiii. 14), did not this involve their partaking in that Divine Nature which was common to the Three Persons of the Godhead? Christ was one with them and with the Father, dwelling in them by the power of the Spirit.

having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust] The verb, which occurs again in chap. ii. 18, 20, is peculiar to this Epistle in the New Testament. The word for "corruption," though not peculiar, is yet characteristic (chap. ii. 12, 19). The "corruption" has its seat outwardly, as contrasted with the kingdom of God, in the world that lies in wickedness (1 John v. 19); inwardly in the element of desire ("lust" in its widest sense), which makes men live to themselves and not to God. The moment of escape must be thought of as that of conversion, of which baptism was the outward sign.

5. *and beside this, giving all diligence*] Better, **on this very account.** The Apostle does not contemplate the elements of Christian holiness which he proceeds to specify as additions to our participation in the Divine Nature, but rather dwells on that very fact, as a reason for pressing onward in the Christian life with all diligence (better, perhaps, **earnestness**). The use of the word in Jude ver. 3 should be noticed as a parallelism. The Greek for "giving" (literally **bringing in by the side of**) is an unusual word, not found elsewhere in the New Testament, and seems chosen to express the thought that men, though rejoicing in God's gifts, were yet to bring in collaterally, as it were, their own activity (comp. Phil. ii. 13).

add to your faith virtue] The Greek word (*epichorêgein*) is a compound form of that which had been used in 1 Pet. iv. 11 (see note there as to its meaning and history) and furnishes an addition to the list of words common to the two Epistles. In the LXX. it occurs but once (Ecclus. xxv. 22), and it may be noted that this is the only passage (unless Gal. iii. 5 be another instance) where it is used of man's activity and not of God's. Thus taken, the more accurate rendering would be **with and by your faith supply virtue, with virtue knowledge,** and so on. The Greek cannot possibly bear the mean-

knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and
to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; 7
and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these *things* be in 8
you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be*
barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus

ing of "adding to," though the fact is of course implied. What is meant is that each element of the Christian life is to be as an instrument by which that which follows it is wrought out.

knowledge] The word is the simpler *gnosis*, placed here in its right relation to the fuller *epignosis* (see note on ver. 2), to which it leads. The context is decisive against our taking it in the sense of a speculative apprehension of doctrinal mysteries, and we must think of the Apostle as meaning the moral discernment of those who "understand what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. v. 17), who "have their senses exercised to distinguish between good and evil" (Heb. v. 14). This kind of knowledge is to be gained, as the Apostle teaches, by the practice of virtue.

6. *and to knowledge temperance*] Better, as before, **and by knowledge temperance.** The word for "temperance" has a wider range than the modern sense of the English term. "*Self-government*" or "*self-control*" would be better equivalents. In Ecclus. xviii. 30 we have, under the heading in the LXX. of "self-control of the soul" (ἐγκράτεια ψυχῆς), what may almost be called a definition in the form of a precept, "Go not after thy lusts, but refrain thyself from thine appetites." The word is not common in the New Testament, but appears in Acts xxiv. 25; Gal. v. 23.

and to temperance patience] Better, **endurance**, the Greek noun expressing a more active phase of character than the English, bearing up against evils, and continuing steadfast under them. The cognate verb is translated "endure" in Matt. x. 22 and elsewhere.

to patience godliness] See note on ver. 3 for the latter word.

7. *and to godliness brotherly kindness*] Better, perhaps, **love of the brethren.** See note on 1 Pet. i. 22. The recurrence of the words may be noted as evidence in favour of identity of authorship.

and to brotherly kindness charity] Better, **love.** See note on 1 Pet. iv. 8. It is to be regretted, as has been said before, that the varying usage of our translators hinders us from recognising at once the unity of the writers of the New Testament as to the greatness and majesty of "love."

8. *if these things be in you*] The Greek verb expresses the idea of permanent property or possession, as in Matt. xix. 21; 1 Cor. xiii. 3. For "abound," better **multiply**, as expressing the activity of life in each as reproducing itself in manifold acts.

they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful] The words in italics are not necessary for the meaning and make the structure of the sentence awkward. Better, **they make you neither idle nor yet unfruitful.** The word for "barren" is found in the

9 Christ. But he that lacketh these *things* is blind, and cannot see far off, and hath forgotten that *he* was purged from
10 his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these

"idle" of Matt. xii. 36, xx. 3, and elsewhere. The English "barren" introduces a gratuitous tautology.

in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ] Rather, **unto** or **towards**, the Greek preposition pointing to "the knowledge..." not as the region in which their activity is to work, but as the goal to which all that activity should be tending. The "knowledge" is the higher *epignosis* of ver. 3, and its position here, as the end and crown of the Christian hope, well illustrates its relation to the *gnosis* which belongs to an earlier and less perfect state.

9. *But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see far off*] More accurately, **For he to whom these things are not present is blind, near-sighted.** The causal conjunction is important in the sequence of thought. We are to press on from height to height of Christian excellence, *for*, if we do not so press, we sink back into a want of power to perceive even the elementary truths of the kingdom of God. The second of the two words describing this state is defined by Aristotle (*Probl.* 31) as denoting the state of those who are naturally "short-sighted," and is thus adequately rendered in the English version. The man in this state in his spiritual power of vision sees the near things, the circumstances, allurements, provocations of his daily life, but he has lost the power to look to the far-off things of the life eternal. This seems, on the whole, a truer interpretation than that which, taking the definition of the word given by some Greek lexicographers as meaning "one who closes his eyes," sees in it a description of one whose blindness is self-caused, who wilfully closes the eyes of the spirit that he may not look upon the truth. The state of the blind man who saw "men, as trees, walking" (Mark viii. 24) offers a suggestive parallel.

and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins] Literally, **and hath taken to himself forgetfulness** (the noun is not found elsewhere in the New Testament) **of the purification of his sins of long ago.** The spiritual fact described is like that of which St James speaks, and indicates a like train of thought (James i. 23, 24). The "purification" is that of conversion symbolized and made effectual by baptism, and connects itself with the stress laid upon it in the words that belong to one great crisis of the Apostle's life (Acts x. 15, xi. 9, xv. 9). The man who forgets this cleansing of his soul, and acts as if he were in his simply natural state, with no power to resist temptation, does in fact ignore what God has done for him, and treats "the sins of long ago" as though they were still the inevitable accompaniments of the present.

10. *give diligence to make your calling and election sure*] We hardly need to prove that the "calling and election" of which St Peter speaks were thought of by him as Divine acts according to the Divine fore-

things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be minis- 11
tered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of
our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always 12
in remembrance of these *things*, though ye know *them*, and
be stablished in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as 13

knowledge (1 Pet. i. 2, ii. 21). He was not hindered, however, by any speculative difficulties from admitting that it was in man's power to frustrate both (comp. 2 Cor. vi. 1; Gal. ii. 21), and that effort was required to give them permanent validity. They were, from his point of view, as the conditions of a covenant offered by God's mercy, but it remained with man to ratify or rescind the compact.

ye shall never fall] More literally, and more significantly, **ye shall never stumble**, "stumbling" being, as in Rom. xi. 11, a step short of falling. The use of the word may be noted as presenting a coincidence with the language of St James (Jas. ii. 10, iii. 2).

11. *for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly*] Better, **the entrance shall be richly bestowed** or **supplied**. The verb is the same as that which is translated "add" in ver. 5, where see note. The Greek has the article with the noun as defining the entrance to be that which was the well-known object of the faith and hope of all Christians. In St Peter's use of the word we may, perhaps, trace an echo of 1 Thess. i. 9, ii. 1, though it is used there in a lower sense.

everlasting] The rule of keeping, as far as possible, to uniformity of rendering would make **eternal** preferable. It is, perhaps, worth noting that this is the only passage in the New Testament in which the adjective is joined to "kingdom."

12. *Wherefore I will not be negligent*] Many of the better MSS. have the reading "I will proceed to put you in remembrance," but the Received Text is fairly supported. The words in either case indicate the anxiety with which the Apostle looked on the threatening dangers of the time. In the addition of "though ye know them" we trace a touch of humility and courtesy, like that of St Paul in Rom. i. 12. In assuming previous knowledge, the Apostle finds, as the greatest of Greek orators had found before him (Demosth. p. 74. 7), the surest means of making that knowledge at once clearer and deeper.

in the present truth] The translation, though quite literal, is for the English reader somewhat misleading, as suggesting the thought that the Apostle is speaking of some special truth, not of the truth as a whole. Better, therefore, **in the truth which is present with you**. So taken the words furnish a suggestive parallel to 1 Pet. v. 12, as a recognition of the previous work of St Paul and his fellow-labourers in the Asiatic provinces.

13. *Yea, I think it meet*] More accurately, **But I think it right.** Though he knows them to be established in the truth, he yet looks on it as his duty to remind them of what they know.

long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting
14 *you* in remembrance; knowing that shortly *I* must put off
this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath
15 shewed me. Moreover I will endeavour that you may
be able after my decease to have these *things* always in

as long as I am in this tabernacle] The term chosen is interesting (1) as a parallel to St Paul's use of the same imagery in 2 Cor. v. 1, and (2) as connected with the reference to the Transfiguration which follows. In that vision on the mount, it will be remembered, St Peter had uttered the prayer "Let us make three tabernacles..." (Matt. xvii. 4). He had now learnt that the true tabernacle of Christ was His human body, and to think of his own body also as the tabernacle of His Spirit.

to stir you up by putting you in remembrance] The phrase, which occurs again in chap. iii. 1, may be noticed as characteristic of St Peter. He assumes a knowledge not only of the broad outlines of Gospel truth, but of the facts of the Gospel history, including, it is obvious, the history of the Transfiguration, and corresponding therefore to the record found in the first three Gospels.

14. *knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle*] Better, **knowing that swift will be the putting off of my tabernacle.** He speaks not so much of the nearness of his death, as of the suddenness with which it would come upon him, and he is therefore anxious to make all necessary preparations for it. In the word for "putting off" we have, as in 2 Cor. v. 1—3, a blending of the two closely connected ideas of a tent and a garment. Comp. a like association of ideas in Ps. civ. 2.

even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me] Better, **shewed me,** the aorist pointing to some time definitely present to his mind. The only extant record of any such intimation in the Gospels is that in John xxi. 18, 19, and, assuming the genuineness of this Epistle, it is obvious that it supplies an interesting testimony to the truth of that narrative. It will be remembered that we have already seen an interesting allusive reference to it in 1 Pet. v. 2. Even on the other hypothesis it is, at least, evidence of the early date of a tradition corresponding to that which St John has recorded.

15. *Moreover I will endeavour that you may be able after my decease...*] The word "endeavour" in the modern sense is perhaps slightly too weak, the Greek verb implying diligent and earnest effort. In the Greek word for "decease" (*exodos*), we meet with another suggestive coincidence with the history of the Transfiguration. When the Apostle had seen the forms of Moses and Elijah, they had spoken of the "decease" which Christ should accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke ix. 31). It may be noted that this use of the word, as an euphemistic synonym for "death," is entirely absent from Greek classical writers, and that probably the two passages referred to are the earliest instances of its use in that sense. It occurs, however, a little later in Josephus (*Ant.* IV. 8, § 2) and in Wisd. iii. 2 ("Their *departure* was taken for misery"), probably the work of a contemporary. In the intention thus expressed we may fairly see a confirmation of the tradition which speaks of St Mark's

remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised 16
fables, when we made known unto you the power and
coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of

acting as the "interpreter" or amanuensis of St Peter, in writing his Gospel, recording, at the request of the Apostle's disciples, what they had heard orally from him. (Euseb. *Hist.* II. 15, III. 39, Iren. III. 10, § 6.)

Another interpretation of the words may be noticed as deserving a place among the curiosities of exegesis. Roman Catholic commentators, Cornelius a Lapide and others, have connected the words "after my decease" with the verb "I will endeavour," and have thus construed the Apostle's words into an argument for his continued watchfulness and superintendence over the development of the Church's doctrine.

16. *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you...*] More accurately, **For it was not as following cunningly devised fables that we made known**—the connexion being one not of time but of causation. The "fables" or "myths" referred to are probably those of which St Paul speaks in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. i. 4, iv. 7; 2 Tim. iv. 4; Tit. i. 14), which were, as the description there given of them indicates, mainly of Jewish origin. With these there might be mingled the germs of the Gnosticism incipient in the Apostolic age, and developed more fully in the next century. Possibly there may be an allusive reference to the claims of the sorcerer of Samaria, with whom the Apostle had himself come into collision (Acts viii. 10). The boast of Simon that he was the "great power of God," and that his mistress Helena was the incarnation of the Divine Thought or Wisdom by which the worlds were made, would answer, closely enough, to the "cunningly devised fables" of which St Peter speaks. The word for "cunningly devised," framed, i. e, with fraudulent and sophistical purpose, is not found elsewhere in the New Testament. The question what the Apostle refers to in "we made known to you:" it may refer either to unrecorded teaching addressed to the Asiatic Churches, or to the wider circle of readers defined in verse 1, or, more probably, to the teaching of the First Epistle as to the glory that was to be manifested "at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter i. 7, 13, iv. 13). The tone in which the offensive epithet is used suggests the thought that he is defending himself against a charge of having followed "fables." Is it possible that that charge had been brought against his teaching as to "the spirits in prison," as something superadded to the received oral traditions of the Church, or to the written records, whether identical with our present Gospels or not, in which that teaching had been embodied?

the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ] The "coming," here, as in every other passage of the New Testament in which the word occurs, is the Second Advent, not the first. The mind of the Apostle goes back to what he had witnessed in the glory of the Transfiguration, as the pledge and earnest of that which was afterwards to be revealed. The word does not occur in the First Epistle, but the fact is implied in 1 Pet. i. 7, 13, iv. 13, v. 4.

17 his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well

but were eyewitnesses of his majesty] Both words are significant. That for "eye-witnesses" (not found elsewhere in the New Testament, but used of God as the all-seeing in 2 Macc. vii. 35; 3 Macc. ii. 21) was applied in Classical Greek to the highest order of those who were initiated as spectators of the Eleusinian mysteries. It would, perhaps, be too much to say that that association was definitely present to the Apostle's mind, but the choice of an unusual and suggestive word at least implies that he looked on himself as having been chosen to a special privilege. It deserves notice also, as bearing on the authorship of the Epistle, that the verb derived from the noun had been used by the writer of 1 Pet. ii. 12, iii. 2. (See notes there.) The word for "majesty" also has the interest of having been used in the Gospel narrative in close connexion with the healing of the demoniac boy which followed the Transfiguration (Luke ix. 43), and, as found there, may fairly be taken as including, as far as the three disciples who had seen the vision of glory were concerned, what had preceded that work of healing, as well as the work itself. The only other passage in the New Testament in which it is found is in Acts xix. 27, where it is used of the "magnificence" of the Ephesian Artemis.

17. *For he received from God the Father honour and glory*] The Greek construction is participial, **For having received**..., the structure of the sentence being interrupted by the parenthetical clause which follows, and not resumed. The English version may be admitted, though it conceals this fact, as a fair solution of the difficulty. "Honour and glory." The two words are naturally joined together as in Rom. ii. 7, 10; 1 Tim. i. 17; Heb. ii. 7, 9; Rev. iv. 9, 11, v. 12. If we are to press the distinctive force of each, the "honour" may be thought of as referring to the attesting voice at the Transfiguration, the "glory" to the light which enveloped the person of the Christ, like the Shechinah cloud of 1 Kings viii. 10, 11; Isai. vi. 1, 4; Matt. xvii. 1—5; Mark ix. 2—7; Luke ix. 28—36.

when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory] Literally, **when such a voice as this was borne to Him**. The choice of the verb instead of the more usual word for "came," connects itself with the use of the same verb in St Luke's account of the Pentecostal gift (Acts ii. 2), and the Apostle's own use of it in verse 21 in connexion with the gift of prophecy. The word for "excellent" (more literally, **magnificent**, or **majestic**, as describing the transcendent brightness of the Shechinah-cloud), not found elsewhere in the New Testament, is, perhaps, an echo from the LXX. of Deut. xxxiii. 26, where God is described as "the excellent (or *majestic*) One of the firmament." The corresponding noun appears in the LXX. of Ps. xxi. 5, where the English version has "majesty." The Greek preposition has the force of "by" rather than "from" the glory, the person of the Father being identified with the Glory which was the token of His presence.

pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, 18
when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also 19
a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that

This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased] The words are given, with one slight variation not perceptible in the English, as we find them in Matt. xvii. 5. It is obvious, assuming the genuineness of the Epistle, that we have here a testimony of great value to the truth of the Gospel records. As there is no reference to any written record of the words, and, we may add, as St Peter omits the words "Hear ye Him," which St Matthew adds, the testimony has distinctly the character of independence. Had the Epistle been the spurious work of a pseudonymous writer, it is at least probable that they would have been given in the precise form in which they are found in one or other of the Gospels. St Mark and St Luke, it may be noted, omit the words "in whom I am well pleased." The tense used in the Greek of these words is past, and not present, implying that the "delight" with which the Father contemplated the Son had been from eternity. The whole passage has a special interest, as pointing to the place which the Transfiguration occupied in the spiritual education of the three disciples who witnessed it. The Apostle looked back upon it, in his old age, as having stamped on his mind ineffaceably the conviction that the glory on which he had then looked was the pledge and earnest of that hereafter to be revealed. Comp. the probable reference to the same event in John i. 14.

18. *And this voice which came from heaven we heard...*] More accurately, as better expressing the force of the special word used here as in the previous verse, **And this voice borne from heaven we heard....** The "we" is emphatic, as giving prominence to the fact of the personal testimony of the Apostle and his two brother-disciples.

when we were with him in the holy mount] It has been urged by some critics that the description of the Mount of the Transfiguration by the term which in Old Testament language was commonly applied to Zion (Ps. ii. 6) indicates the phraseology of a later age than that of the Apostles. It is obvious, however, in answer, that the scene of the manifestation of the Divine glory of which he speaks could not appear as other than "holy ground"—holy as Horeb had been of old (Exod. iii. 5; Acts vii. 33)—to the Apostle who had been there. Comp. Josh. v. 15. Whether, as the Gospel narrative indicates, it was on the heights of Hermon (Matt. xvi. 13), or, as later tradition reported, on Mount Tabor, it would remain for ever as a consecrated spot in the Apostle's memory. It may, perhaps, be inferred from the tone in which he thus speaks of it, that he assumes that his readers had already some knowledge of the fact referred to.

19. *We have also a more sure word of prophecy*] Better, **And we have yet more steadfast the prophetic word.** The force of the comparative must have its full significance. The "prophetic word" was for the Apostle, taught as he had been in his Master's school of prophetic interpretation, and himself possessing the prophetic gift, a witness of yet greater force than the voice from heaven and the glory of which he had

ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

been an eye-witness. He uses the term in its widest sense, embracing the written prophecies of the Old Testament and the spoken or written prophecies of the New. It is a suggestive fact that the Second Epistle ascribed (though probably wrongly) to Clement of Rome, contains what is given as a quotation from "the prophetic word" (chap. xi.), and that that quotation presents a striking parallel to the language of St James on the one hand, and to that of this Epistle on the other. "If we are not servants to the Gospel of God because we believe not the promise, wretched are we. For the prophetic word saith, Wretched are the double-minded, those who doubt in their heart (James i. 8); who say, All these things we heard in the days of our fathers, but we, waiting day by day, have seen none of these things" (2 Pet. iii. 4). Was the Apostle referring to a "prophetic word" such as this, which was then actually extant, and was to him and others as the sheet-anchor of their faith? The words quoted by the pseudo-Clement prove the existence of such a document, as held in high authority, and, though the book itself is lost, there is nothing improbable in the thought that the Apostle should refer to it, and the continuous guidance of the Spirit of which it was the token, as confirming all his previous belief, and assuring him that he had not followed cunningly-devised fables nor been the victim of an illusion. In any case we must think of him as referring to the continuous exercise of the prophetic gift, the power to speak words which came to the souls of men as a message from God, which had been given to himself and others. We can scarcely fail to note the identity of thought with that expressed in the Apostle's speech in Acts ii. 16—21.

whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place] Better, **as to a torch shining in a gloomy place.** It may be noted (1) that the "*torch shining*" is precisely the term applied by our Lord ("the burning and the *shining light*," John v. 35) to John the Baptist as the last in the long line of the prophets of the older covenant; and (2) that the Greek word for "dark" or "gloomy" (not found elsewhere in the New Testament) is applied strictly to the squalor and gloom of a dungeon. Interpreting the word, we find in the "gloomy place" the world in which the lot of the disciples was as yet cast. For them the "prophetic word," written or spoken, was as a torch casting its beams athwart the murky air, preparing the way for a radiance yet brighter than its own.

until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts] The imagery reminds us of that of Rom. xiii. 12 ("the night is far spent, the day is at hand"), but with a very marked and manifest difference. In St Paul's thoughts the "day" is identical with the coming of the Lord, as an objective fact; the close of the world's "night" of ignorance and darkness. Here the addition of the words "and the day star arise *in your hearts*" fixes its meaning as, in some sense, subjective. The words point accordingly to a direct manifestation of Christ to the soul of the believer as being higher than the "prophetic word," as that, in its

knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of 20
any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in 21

turn, had been higher than the attestation of the visible glory and the voice from heaven. So understood, the passage presents an interesting parallelism with the "marvellous light" of 1 Pet. ii. 9, as also with the "day-spring from on high" of Luke i. 78. The word for "day star," the morning star (literally, **Lucifer**, the light-bearer), the star that precedes and accompanies the rising of the sun, is not found elsewhere in the New Testament or in the LXX., but it is identical in meaning with the "bright and morning star" of Rev. ii. 28, xxii. 16, and the use of the same image by the two Apostles indicates that it had come to be recognised as a symbolic name of the Lord Jesus as manifested to the souls of His people.

20. *knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation*] The true meaning of the passage turns partly on the actual significance of the last word, partly on the sequence of thought as connected with the foregoing. The noun itself does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament nor in the LXX., but in Aquila's version of Gen. xl. 8 it is given as the equivalent of "interpretation." The corresponding verb meets us, however, in Mark iv. 34 ("he *explained* all things to his disciples") and in Acts xix. 39 ("it shall be *determined*"), and this leaves no doubt that "interpretation" or "solution" is the right rendering. Nor again is there much room for doubt as to the meaning of "prophecy of scripture." The words can only point to a "prophetic word" embodied in a writing and recognised as Scripture. We have seen, however (see note on 1 Pet. i. 10—12), that the gift of prophecy was thought of as belonging to the present as fully as to the past, and chap. iii. 16, 1 Tim. v. 18, and possibly Rom. xvi. 26 and 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4, shew that the word Scripture had come to have a wider range of meaning than that which limited its use to the Old Testament writings, and may therefore be taken here in its most comprehensive sense. Stress must also be laid on the Greek verb rendered "is," which might better be translated **cometh**, or **cometh into being**. With these data the true explanation of the passage is not far to seek. The Apostle calls on men to give heed to the prophetic word on the ground that no prophecy, authenticated as such by being recognised as part of Scripture, whether that Scripture belongs to the Old, or the New Covenant, comes by the prophet's own interpretation of the facts with which he has to deal, whether those facts concern the outer history of the world, or the unfolding of the eternal truths of God's Kingdom. It is borne to him, as he proceeds to shew in the next verse, from a higher source, from that which is, in the truest sense of the word, an inspiration. The views held by some commentators, (1) that St Peter is protesting against the application of private judgment to the interpretation of prophecy, and (2) that he is contending that no single prophecy can be interpreted apart from the whole body of prophetic teaching contained in Scripture, are, it is believed, less satisfactory explanations of the Apostle's meaning.

old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.

2 But there were false prophets also among the people,

21. *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man*] More accurately, **For prophecy was not sent** (or **borne**) **at any time by the will of man.** The article before "prophecy" in the Greek simply gives to the noun the generic sense which is better expressed in English by the absence of the article. The word for "came" is the same as that used of the "voice" in verses 17, 18, and is, as there shewn, characteristic of St Peter. That for "old time" is wider in its range than the English words, and takes in the more recent as well as the more distant past, and is therefore applicable to the prophecies of the Christian no less than to those of the Jewish Church. In the phrase "by the will of men" we have a parallelism with John i. 13.

but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost] Better, **but being borne on** (the same word as the "came" of the previous verse, and therefore used with an emphasis which cannot well be reproduced in English) **by the Holy Ghost, men spake from God.** Some of the better MSS. have the preposition "from" instead of the adjective "holy." The words assert in the fullest sense the inspiration of all true prophets. Their work did not originate in their own will. They felt impelled by a Spirit mightier than their own. The mode and degree of inspiration and its relation to the prophet's cooperating will and previous habits of thought are left undefined. The words lend no support to a theory of an inspiration dictating the very syllables uttered by the prophet, still less do they affirm anything as to the nature of the inspiration of the writers of the books of the Old Testament who were not prophets. If we retain the Received Text, we have in it an example of the use of the term "man of God" (i. e. called and sent by Him) as equivalent to "prophet," parallel to what we find in Deut. xxxiii. 1; 2 Kings iv. 9, 16, v. 8, and probably in 1 Tim. vi. 11.

CHAPTER II.

1. *But there were false prophets also among the people*] The section of the Epistle which now opens contains so many parallelisms with the Epistle of St Jude that we can scarcely avoid the conclusion that one was derived from the other, or both from a common source. For a discussion of the questions which thus present themselves see Introduction. As regards the meaning of the words it is again an open question whether the Apostle refers to the remoter past of the history of Israel, to the false prophets of the days of Ahab (1 Kings xxii. 12), or Isaiah (ix. 15, xxviii. 7), or Jeremiah (Jer. xiv. 14, xxvii. 10), or Ezekiel (Ezek. xiii. 3), or Zechariah (Zech. xiii. 4), or to those who in his own time had deceived the "people" (the distinctive term for "Israel") in Jerusalem. The warnings against false prophets in our Lord's discourses (Matt. vii. 22, xxiv. 24), and the like warnings in 1 John iv. 1, make it probable that he had chiefly the latter class in view. In the Greek compound noun (*pseudo-didaskaloi*) for "false teachers"

even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift

we have another word peculiar to St Peter. The word was, perhaps, chosen as including in its range not only those who came with a direct claim to prophetic inspiration, but all who without authority should appear as teachers of a doctrine that was not true, and, as such, it would include the Judaizing teachers on the one side, the Gnosticizing teachers on the other. Comp. the distinction between "prophets" and "teachers" in Eph. iv. 11; 1 Cor. xii. 29.

who privily shall bring in] The verb is that from which was formed the adjective which St Paul uses for the "false brethren **unawares brought in**" (Gal. ii. 4). Are we justified in thinking that St Peter speaks of the same class of Judaizing teachers, or that he uses the word as indicating that it was applicable to others also, who were, it might be, at the opposite extreme of error?

damnable heresies] Literally, **heresies of destruction**. The word "heresy," literally, "the *choice* of a party," was used by later Greek writers for a philosophic sect or school like that of the Stoics or Epicureans, and hence, as in Acts v. 17, xv. 5, xxiv. 5, xxvi. 5, xxviii. 22; 1 Cor. xi. 19, for a "sect" or "party" in the Church, and thence, again, for the principles characterizing such a sect, and so it passed to the ecclesiastical sense of "heresy." The English adjective "damnable" hardly expresses the force of the Greek genitive, which indicates that the leading characteristic of the heresies of which the Apostle speaks was that they led men to "destruction" or "perdition." Comp. the use of the same word in 1 Tim. vi. 9. It may be noted that it is a word specially characteristic of this Epistle, in which it occurs six times; twice here, and in verses 2 and 3, and chap. iii. 7, 16.

even denying the Lord that bought them] The word for Lord (*despotes*), literally, a master as contrasted with a slave (1 Tim. vi. 1, 2), is used of Christ here, in the hymn, which we may fairly connect with St Peter, in Acts iv. 24, in Rev. vi. 10, and, in conjunction with the more common word for Lord (*Kyrios*), in Jude ver. 4. Here the choice of the word was probably determined by the connexion with the idea of "buying," as a master buys a slave. The use of that word presents a parallelism with the thought of 1 Pet. i. 18, and here, as there, we have to think of the "precious blood of Christ" as the price that had been paid. No words could better assert the truth that the redemption so wrought was universal in its range than these. The sin of the teachers of these "heresies of perdition" was that they would not accept the position of redeemed creatures which of right belonged to them. The "denial" referred to may refer either to a formal rejection of Christ as the Son of God, like that of 1 John ii. 22, 23, or to the practical denial of base and ungodly lives. The former is, perhaps, more prominently in view, but both are probably included. We cannot read the words without recollecting that the

2 destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways;
by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.
3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words
make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long
time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

writer had himself, in one memorable instance, denied his Lord (Matt. xxvi. 69—75). In his case, however, the denial came from a passing cowardice and was followed by an immediate repentance. That which he here condemns was more persistent and malignant in its nature, and was as yet unrepented of.

bring upon themselves swift destruction] The adjective, which is peculiar to St Peter in the New Testament (here and in chap. i. 14), implies the swift unlooked-for manner of the destruction that was to be the end of the false teachers rather than the nearness of its approach. The Apostle seems to contemplate either some sudden "visitation of God," or possibly some quick exposure of their falsehood and baseness before men, ending in their utter confusion.

2. *And many shall follow their pernicious ways*] Better, **their lasciviousnesses**. The word is the same as in Mark vii. 22, Rom. xiii. 13, 1 Pet. iv. 3, and elsewhere; and the English version loses the distinctive character of the sectarian teaching and conduct (analogous to what is noted in Jude, verses 4, 8, Rev. ii. 20) which called down the Apostle's condemnation. The needless variation in the rendering of the English version hinders the reader from perceiving the identity with St Jude's condemnation of those who "turn the grace of God into *lasciviousness*."

the way of truth shall be evil spoken of] Better, **reviled** or **blasphemed**. Comp. Rom. ii. 24. In the use of the term "*the way* of truth" we have an interesting parallel with the frequent occurrence of that word in the Acts (xviii. 26, xix. 9, 23, xxii. 4, xxiv. 22), as equivalent to what we should call, in modern phrase, the "system" or the "religion" of Christ. The scandals caused by the impurities of the false teachers brought discredit upon the whole system with which, in the judgment of the outside world, they were identified.

3. *through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you*] Better, **in** or **with** covetousness. The adjective for "*feigned*" is not found elsewhere in the New Testament. This greed of gain, found in strange union with high-flown claims to a higher knowledge and holiness than that of others, seems to have been one of the chief features of the heresies of the Apostolic age. Comp. 1 Tim. vi. 5; Tit. i. 11. If they made proselytes it was only that they might get profit out of them.

whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not] Better, **for whom judgment for a long time idleth not.**

damnation] Better, **destruction**, as keeping up the continuity of thought with the preceding verses. The thought involves a half-personification of the two nouns. "Judgment" does not loiter on its

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* 4
down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness,
to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old 5
world, but saved Noah the eighth *person*, a preacher of

way; "destruction" does not nod drowsily, like the foolish virgins of Matt. xxv. 5. Both are eager, watchful, waiting for the appointed hour.

4. *For if God spared not the angels that sinned*] Better, **spared not angels**, there being no article in the Greek. Here the nature of the sin is not specified. We may think either of a rebellion of angels headed by Satan, such as Milton has represented in *Paradise Lost*, or of the degradation of their spiritual nature by sensual lust, as in Gen. vi. 2. Looking to the more definite language of Jude, verses 6—8, where the guilt of the angels is placed on a level with that of Sodom, it seems probable that the Apostle had the latter in his thoughts.

but cast them down to hell] Literally, **cast them into Tartarus**. The use of a word so closely bound up with the associations of Greek mythology is a phenomenon absolutely unique in the New Testament. A compound form of the same word had been used of Zeus as inflicting punishment on Cronos and the rebel Titans. (Apollodorus, *Bibl.* I. 1.) Here it is used of the Almighty as punishing rebellious angels.

delivered them into chains of darkness] The MSS. present two readings, one giving a word which literally means a "rope," as in the LXX. of Prov. v. 22, and may, therefore, rightly be rendered "cords," "bonds," or "chains," so agreeing with the thought of Wisd. xvii. 17 ("they were bound with a *chain* of darkness") and Jude, verse 6, and the other a noun which has probably the meaning of "dens" or "caves." The latter is the best supported, having A, B, C and ℵ in its favour. The two words differ but by a single letter, (1) σειραῖς, and (2) σειροῖς, and as (2) was the less familiar of the two and (1) agreed better with the "everlasting chains" (or "bonds") of Jude verse 6, the change was a natural one for transcribers to make.

to be reserved unto judgment] Literally, **being reserved**. The judgment in Jude, verse 6, is defined as that of the "great day." Here it is left undefined, but it is natural to refer it to the same great day of doom. As far as the text goes, it indicates a difference of some kind between the angels who are thus imprisoned, and the "demons" who torment and harass men on earth, but it would be hazardous to dogmatise with undue definiteness, on the strength of this passing allusion, as to the condition of these inhabitants of the unseen world.

5. *and spared not the old world...*] The *à fortiori* argument is continued, and enters on the series of typical examples of judgments which St Peter had heard from our Lord's lips in Luke xvii. 26—29. In regard to this instance we note the parallelism with 1 Pet. iii. 20, extending even to the stress laid on the number of those who were rescued from the destruction—"Noah, the eighth person," is, according to a common idiom, equivalent to "Noah and seven others." The nouns in

righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the
6 ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha
into ashes condemned *them* with an overthrow, making
them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;
7 and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of
8 the wicked: (for *that* righteous *man* dwelling among them,
in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day
9 to day with *their* unlawful deeds;) the Lord knoweth *how*
to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the

the clause that follows are remarkable as being all without the article in the Greek.

bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly] The description of Noah as "a preacher of righteousness" has no verbal counterpart in the language of the Old Testament, but it is obviously implied in the substance of the narrative.

6. *and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes...*] The parallelism with Luke xvii. 26—29 continues and here runs on side by side with Jude (verse 7), who omits, however, any reference to the deluge, and does not dwell on the deliverance of Lot.

making them an ensample...] St Peter does not see in the supernatural destruction of the cities of the plain an exception to the normal order of the Divine government. It was rather a pattern instance of the judgment sure to fall, sooner or later, on all who were guilty of like sins. It may be noted that that destruction had been used as an illustration by the older prophets (Isai. i. 9, 10; Ezek. xvi. 48—56) as well as by our Lord.

7. *vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked*] More accurately, **vexed with the mode of life** (or **conduct**) **of the lawless ones in lasciviousness.** On "conversation" see notes on 1 Pet. i. 15, and on "lasciviousness" note on verse 2.

8. *for that righteous man...*] Literally, **the** righteous man. We note the use of the term in this half-generic, half-individual, way as analogous to that of James v. 6.

vexed his righteous soul] Literally, **tortured,** as in Mark v. 7, vi. 48. It would have seemed scarcely necessary to point out that the words refer to the pain suffered by a man of sensitive moral nature at the sight and report of flagrant evil (comp. Ezekiel's language (ix. 4) as to those "that sigh and that cry" for the abominations done in Jerusalem) had not some patristic interpreters of authority (Theophylact and Œcumenius) seen in them a description of the self inflicted ascetic discipline by which Lot maintained his purity. It may be noted that the "seeing" is peculiar to St Peter.

9. *the godly...the unjust*] Both adjectives are in the Greek without the article.

out of temptations] The word includes the *trial* of conflict with evil, as well as its alluring side. See note on 1 Pet. i. 6.

unjust unto the day of judgment *to be* punished: but chiefly 10
them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness,
and despise government. Presumptuous *are they*, self-
willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.
Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, 11

to be punished] Literally, **under punishment.** The participle is in the present tense, and has no future or gerundial force. The ungodly are represented as being already under a penal process of some kind. If we take the Greek word for "punished" in the sense in which it was received by the Greek ethical writers (Aristotle, *Rhet.* I. 10), who distinguish between *kolasis*, as punishment inflicted for the good of the sufferer, and *timôria* as inflicted for the satisfaction of justice, the word chosen by St Peter at least admits the idea of the punishment being corrective. In the only other passage in which the word occurs (Acts iv. 21) the verb implies a penalty inflicted in order to bring about a desired result. Looking to the fact that the words obviously refer to the case of Noah as well as that of Lot, we may find in them a point of contact with 1 Pet. iii. 19, iv. 6. Those who are here said to be under punishment are the same as the "spirits in prison," who were "judged" in order that they might "live."

10. *but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness*] Literally, in the lust of **defilement,** the genitive being either that of a characterising attribute, or implying that those of whom the writer speaks had fallen to a depth of baseness in which they seemed to desire impurity for its own sake, apart even from the mere pleasure of indulged appetite. (Comp. Rom. i. 28.) In the parallel passage of Jude, verse 7, we have the addition "going after strange flesh." The Apostle seems to have in view the darker forms of impurity which were common throughout the Roman Empire (Rom. i. 24—28). St Paul uses the cognate verb in Tit. i. 15.

and despise government] More literally, **lordship,** or, perhaps better, **dominion.** In Eph. i. 21, Col. i. 16 the word seems used of angelic authorities. Here apparently, as in Jude verse 8, the abstract noun is used as including all forms of authority, just as St Paul uses "power" in Rom. xiii. 1, 2.

Presumptuous are they] Better, **Daring,** or perhaps, **Darers.**

they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities] Better, **they do not tremble as they blaspheme** (or **revile**) **glories.** The last word may be used like "principalities" and "powers," as including all forms of the dignity that gives glory, but the context seems to shew that it also is used with special reference to angels. This passage, with the parallel in Jude, verses 8, 9, suggests the inference that the undue "worshipping of angels" in the Judaizing Gnosticism which had developed out of the teaching of the Essenes (Col. ii. 18) had been met by its more extreme opponents with coarse and railing mockery as to all angels whether good or evil, and that the Apostle felt it necessary to rebuke this licence of speech as well as that which paid no respect to human authority.

11. *Whereas angels, which are greater in power...*] Some of the

bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.
12 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and
destroyed, speak evil of *the things* that they understand not;
13 and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall
receive the reward of unrighteousness, *as* they that count it

MSS. omit the words "before the Lord." The words as they stand here leave it uncertain of what instance the Apostle speaks, but it is probable that he refers to the tradition mentioned by St Jude (see notes on Jude 9), or possibly to the words spoken by the Angel of the Lord to Satan as the accuser of Joshua the son of Josedech in Zech. iii. 2. In the "railing" accusation, we have a distinct reference to the "reviling" or "speaking evil" of the previous verse. The Vulgate rendering "non portant adversus se execrabile judicium" is probably meant to convey the sense "against each other," but it has been strangely interpreted by Lyra and other Roman Catholic commentators as meaning that as "evil angels cannot endure the accursed doom that falls on them from the Lord," how much less will ungodly men be able to endure it. The true sequence of thought is obviously that if good angels refrain from a railing **judgment** (not "accusation") against evil ones, how much more should men refrain from light or railing words in regard to either.

12. *But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed*] Literally, **as irrational merely natural animals born for capture and destruction.** A different order of the words in some MSS. justifies the rendering **born by their nature.** The words express a strong indignation, at first sight scarcely reconcilable with the implied protest against a railing accusation. It must be remembered however that the whole context implies a depth of infamy and impurity for which no language could well be too strong in its scornful condemnation.

speak evil of the things that they understand not] Literally, **speaking evil** (or **railing**) **in the things in which they are ignorant.** The words point to the same form of railing as before. They present, as it were, the evil of which St Paul speaks ("intruding into those things which they have not seen," Col. ii. 18) at its opposite pole. As, on the one hand, there was the danger of an undue reverence for angelic "dignities," so, on the other, there was the peril of men acting irreverently, from the standpoint of an equally crass ignorance, and speaking of the mystery of spiritual evil, not with solemn awe, but with foolish talking and jesting.

and shall utterly perish in their own corruption] We cannot improve on the English rendering, but it fails to give the emphasis which is found in the Greek from the repetition of the same root both in the noun and the verb. Literally the clause runs, **they shall be corrupted in and by their corruption,** i.e. in St Paul's words, of which these are in fact the echo, "they that sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption" (Gal. vi. 8).

13. *and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness...*] The words, which stand in the Greek as one of a series of participial clauses, are, perhaps, better joined with the last clause of the preceding verse, **They shall perish.....receiving the reward....**

pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery and that 14

as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time] The latter words have been variously rendered; (1) as in the English version, (2) counting delicate living for a day (i.e. but for a little while, laying stress on the transitoriness of all such indulgence) as pleasure: (1) seems, on the whole, preferable, all the more so as it supplies a point of contact at once with St Peter's own language as to the shamelessness of revel "at the third hour of the day" (Acts ii. 15), and with St Paul's contrast between the works of the day and those of night (Rom. xiii. 13, 14; 1 Thess. v. 7). It has been urged against this that the Greek word for "riot" means rather the delicate and luxurious living (Luke vii. 25) that might be practised both by day and night rather than actual riot, but it is obvious that luxury shews itself chiefly in banquets which belong to night, and to carry the same luxury into the morning meal might well be noted as indicating excess. In the Greek version by Symmachus a cognate noun is applied to the banqueters of Amos vi. 7.

Spots they are and blemishes] The former word is found in Eph. v. 27; the latter is not found elsewhere in the New Testament.

sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you] The MSS. both here and in the parallel passage of Jude (ver. 12) vary between ἀπάταις (=*deceits*) and ἀγάπαις (=*feasts of love*). The latter gives, on the whole, a preferable meaning, and, even if we adopt the former reading, we are compelled by the context to look on the love-feasts as the scene of the sin referred to. The *Agapae* were a kind of social club-feast, at first, perhaps, connected in time and place with the Lord's Supper, but afterwards first distinguished and then divided from it. They were a witness of the new brotherhood in which the conventional distinctions of society were suspended, and rich and poor met together. Their existence is recognised in early ecclesiastical writers, in the first century by Ignatius (*ad Smyrn.* c. 2), in the second by Tertullian (*Apol.* c. 39), and they survived for three or four hundred years, till the disorders connected with them led to their discontinuance. In 1 Cor. xi. 21 we have traces of such disorders at a very early period, and St Peter's language here shews that they had found their way into the Asiatic Churches as well as into that of Corinth. The "false teachers" and their followers took their place in the company of the faithful, and instead of being content with their simple food, consisting probably of bread, fish, and vegetables (the fish are always prominent in the representations of the *Agapae* in the Catacombs of Rome), brought with them, it would seem, the materials for a more luxurious meal (comp. 1 Cor. xi. 21), and, as the context shews, abused the opportunities thus given them for wanton glances and impure dalliance. Taking the first reading ("deceits"), the Apostle lays stress on the fact that in doing so they were in fact practising a fraud on the Christian society into which they thus intruded themselves.

14. *having eyes full of adultery*] The Greek gives literally the some-

cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son* of Bosor, who

what strange figure, **having eyes full of an adulteress.** The phrase is probably connected with a recollection of our Lord's words as to the sin of looking on a woman, to lust after her, being equivalent to adultery (Matt. v. 28). St John's mention of the "woman Jezebel" in the Church of Thyatira (Rev. ii. 20—22) suggests the thought that there may have been some conspicuous woman of that type of character present to St Peter's thoughts, who at once encouraged her followers to bring their dainties—even though they were things that had been sacrificed to idols,—to the *Agapae* of the Christian Church, and when they were there held them fascinated by her wanton beauty. The spell thus exercised is further described as causing a restlessness in evil. The eyes that were thus attracted could not "cease from sin."

beguiling unstable souls] The Greek word for "beguiling" may be noted as one of those which St Peter had in common with St James. It means primarily to "take with a bait, or in a snare," and in Jas. i. 14 is rightly rendered "enticed." The idea suggested is that the false teachers attended the *Agapae* as seducers of the innocence of others.

a heart they have exercised with covetous practices] Better, **trained in covetousness.** The words have an adequate meaning if we take "covetousness" in its ordinary sense. Greed of gain as well as wantonness characterised the false teachers. (See note on verse 3.) In not a few instances, however, there is so close a connexion between the Greek word and sins of impurity (comp. 1 Thess. iv. 6; 1 Cor. v. 11; Eph. v. 3, 5) that it is not unreasonable to see that meaning here also. The idiomatic use of the English phrase "taking advantage" of a woman's weakness, presents a like association of thought.

cursed children] Better, **children of a curse.** The Apostle falls back on the old Hebrew idiom of expressing character by the idea of sonship. So we have "children of obedience" in 1 Pet. i. 14. "Children of disobedience" (Eph. ii. 2). The "son of perdition" (John xvii. 12).

15. *which have forsaken the right way...*] There may possibly be a reference to "the way of truth" in ver. 2 and to the general use of "the way" for the sum and substance of the doctrine of Christ. (See note on verse 2.) It may be noted that the charge thus brought against the false teachers by St Peter is identical with that which St Paul brings against Elymas of "perverting the right ways of the Lord" (Acts xiii. 10). We may see in the sorcerer of Cyprus, as well as in that of Samaria, a representative instance of the character which both Apostles condemn.

following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor] The use of the term "way" is probably connected with the stress laid in the narrative of Num. xxii. 32 ("Thy *way* is perverse before me"), in the journey which Balaam took in spite of the Divine warnings. The form Bosor, instead of Beor, may represent the mode of pronouncing the guttural letter that

loved the wages of unrighteousness; but was rebuked for 16
his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad

enters into the Hebrew name (בִּלְעָם) which prevailed in Galilee, analogous to that which in other languages has turned *ἑπτὰ* into *septem*, *ὕλη* into *sylva*, and the like. On this supposition, St Peter's use of the form presents a coincidence with his betraying himself by his Galilean dialect in Matt. xxvi. 73. The characteristic feature of that dialect was its tendency to soften gutturals. Another explanation, not, however, incompatible with this, has been found in the conjecture that as the Hebrew word *Bashar* signifies "flesh," the Apostle may have used the form of the name which conveyed the thought that Balaam was "a son of the flesh," carnal and base of purpose. Like explanations have been given of the change of Sychem (=a portion) into Sychar (=a lie) (John iv. 5), of Beelzebub (=lord of flies) into Beelzebul (=lord of dung) (Matt. x. 25, xii. 24). If we accept the explanation given by many commentators of the name Nicolaitans (Rev. ii. 6) as being a Greek equivalent for Balaamites, there would be reason for thinking that the prominence given to his history at this period of the Apostolic age led men, after the manner of the time, to find even in the syllables of his name a *paronomasia* which made it ominous and significant of evil.

The prominence just spoken of is traceable not only here and in the parallel passage of Jude (ver. 11), but in Rev. ii. 14, where it appears in close connexion with the practice of eating things sacrificed to idols and the impurity associated with that practice. It has been contended by some writers (Renan, *St Paul*, c. x. p. 304) that from the point of view of the three writers who thus refer to Balaam, St Paul, in teaching the essential indifference of the act (1 Cor. viii. 4—8), appeared to reproduce the errors of the son of Beor. The hypothesis is, however, a singularly untenable one. No teacher could condemn the practice more strongly than St Paul, though he does so on rational and spiritual grounds, and not from the Jewish standpoint of there being an actual physical contamination in the things so sacrificed (1 Cor. viii.—x.). It would indeed be much more in accordance with facts to infer that it was St Paul's allusion to the history of Balaam's temptation of the Israelites (1 Cor. x. 8; Num. xxv. 9, xxxi. 16) that first associated the name of the prophet of Pethor with the corrupt practices of the party of licence in the Apostolic Church, and that St Peter, St Jude, and St John were but following in his track. It is noticeable, lastly, that in the purely Ebionite or Judaizing books, known as the *Clementine Homilies* and *Recognitions*, there is no reference to the name of Balaam.

who loved the wages of unrighteousness] The phrase is repeated from verse 13 as laying stress on this point of parallelism between the earlier and later forms of evil. It is not without interest to note that in both the Apostle reproduces what we find recorded as spoken by him in Acts i. 18.

16. *but was rebuked for his iniquity*] Literally, **had a rebuke for his transgression of the law.**

the dumb ass speaking with man's voice...] The Greek word for

17 the madness of the prophet. These are wells without water,
clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist
13 of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak
great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts

"ass" is literally **beast of burden**. It is used, as here, in Matt. xxi. 5. The term for "madness" is not found elsewhere in the New Testament, but the corresponding verb is used by St Paul (2 Cor. xi. 23). For "forbade" it would be better, perhaps, to read **checked**, the actual rebuke having come from the angel, and taking the form of a permission rather than a prohibition. It is obvious that St Peter assumes the truth of the narrative of Num. xxii. (22—33) as beyond question, nor is there indeed any ground for thinking that it was at that time questioned by any reader, as it has been since. It does not fall within the scope of this Commentary to discuss either the objections which have been urged against that narrative, or the explanations that have been offered as toning down or minimising the supernatural element in it.

17. *These are wells without water*] In the parallel passage of St Jude (verse 12) we have "*clouds* without water." In St Peter's variation we may, perhaps, trace an allusive reference to our Lord's teaching as to the "fountain of springing water" in John iv. 14, or to St James' illustration from the "fountain" (the same word as that here translated "well") that sends forth fresh water only, and not salt and fresh together (James iii. 11, 12). We are reminded also of the "broken cisterns that can hold no water" of Jer. ii. 13. There, however, we have in the LXX. the proper Greek word for cisterns as contrasted with the "fountain of living waters."

clouds that are carried with a tempest] More accurately, **mists driven about by a whirlwind**, the better MSS. giving "mists" instead of "clouds." The word was probably chosen as indicating what we should call the "haziness" of the speculations of the false teachers. The Greek word for "tempest" is found also in the descriptions of the storm on the Sea of Galilee in Mark iv. 27; Luke viii. 23. Did St Peter's mind go back to that scene, so that he saw, in the wild whirling mists that brought the risk of destruction, a parable of the storm of heresies by which the Church was now threatened? The imagery, it may be noted, is identical with that used by St Paul, when he speaks of men as "carried about by every wind of doctrine" (Eph. iv. 14).

to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever] The two last words are omitted in some of the best MSS. and versions. For "mist" it would be better to read **blackness**, as in Jude, verse 13. It is noticeable that the word had been used by Homer (*Il.* xv. 191) of the gloom of Hades, and so had probably come to be associated in common language with the thought of Tartarus, as it is here and in verse 4.

18. *For when they speak great swelling words of vanity*] Literally, **For speaking**.... The adjective is used by classical writers both literally and figuratively of excessive magnitude. It indicates what we should call the "high-flown" character of the language of the false teachers.

of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same 19

"Vanity" is used in its proper sense of "emptiness." There was no substance below their show of a transcendental knowledge. Here again we trace a parallel with St Paul's language, "Knowledge puffeth up" (1 Cor. viii. 1).

they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness] Better, **they entice in the lusts of flesh** (describing the state of the tempters) **by** acts of **lasciviousness** (as the dative of the instrument). The word for "allure" is the same as in verse 14. In "wantonness" we have the same word as in verses 2 and 7.

those that were clean escaped from them who live in error] Some of the better MSS. give **those who were a little** (or **partially**) **escaping**... In the one case, stress is laid on the fact that the work of a real and true conversion was marred by the impurity into which the victims were afterwards betrayed; in the other, on the fact that their conversion had been but incomplete, and that therefore they yielded readily to the temptation. A possible construction of the sentence would be to take the last clause in the Greek in apposition with the first, "those that had partially escaped, those that live in error," but the English version gives a preferable meaning. In the verb for "live" we have a cognate form of St Peter's favourite word for "conversation" or "conduct" (1 Pet. i. 15, 18, ii. 12, iii. 1, 2, 16).

19. *While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption*] We have here the characteristic feature of the teaching which St Peter condemns. It offered its followers freedom from the restraints which the Council of Jerusalem had imposed alike on participation in idolatrous feasts and on sins of impurity (Acts xv. 29). That this was the key-note of their claims we have a distinct indication in St Paul's teaching on the same subject. His question "Am I not free?" (1 Cor. ix. 1), his condemnation of those who boasted of their "right" ("liberty" in the English version) to eat things sacrificed to idols (1 Cor. viii. 9), who proclaimed that all things were "lawful" for them (1 Cor. x. 23), shew that this was the watchword of the party of license at Corinth, and the language of St Peter, though more coloured with the feeling of a burning indignation at the later development of the system, is, in substance, but the echo of that of his brother Apostle. In his contrast between the boast of liberty and the actual bondage to corruption we may trace a reproduction of our Lord's teaching in John viii. 34, of St Paul's in Rom. vi. 16. The word for "they are the servants" (literally, **being the servants**) implies that this had been all along their settled, continuous state. The very phrase **bond-slaves of corruption** seems to reproduce Rom. viii. 21.

of whom a man is overcome...] The Greek leaves it uncertain whether the pronouns refer to a person, or to a more abstract power—**wherein a man is overcome, to that he is enslaved.** On the whole the latter

20 is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter *end* is worse with them
21 than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment

seems preferable. Here again we have an echo of St Paul's language in Rom. vi. 16.

20. *For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world*] The word "escaped" had been used above (verse 18) of the followers. Here, as the context shews, in the repetition of the word "overcome" from the preceding verse, it is used of the teachers themselves. They also had once fled from the pollutions of heathen life and heathen worship into which they had now fallen back.

through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ] The word for "knowledge" in the Greek is the compound form (ἐπίγνωσις) which is always used by St Paul (e.g. Eph. iv. 13; Col. ii. 2, iii 10; 1 Tim. ii. 4), and had been used by St Peter (chap. i. 2, 3, 8), of the highest form of knowledge which is spiritual as well as speculative. The false teachers had not been all along hypocrites and pretenders. They had once in the fullest sense of the words "known Christ" as their Lord and Saviour. There is, perhaps, no single passage in the whole extent of New Testament teaching more crucial than this in its bearing on the Calvinistic dogma of the indefectibility of grace. The fullest clearness of spiritual vision had not protected these heresiarchs from the temptations of their sensuous nature.

they are again entangled therein, and overcome] The verb "entangled" is used also by St Paul (2 Tim. ii. 4). It describes vividly the manner of the fall of those of whom the Apostle speaks. They had not at first contemplated the ultimate results of their teaching. It was their boast of freedom which led them within the tangled snares of the corruption in which they were now inextricably involved.

the latter end is worse with them than the beginning] Literally, **the last state has become worse than the first.** The last words are so distinctly a citation from our Lord's teaching in Matt. xii. 45, that we are compelled to think of St Peter as finding in the history of the false teachers that which answered to the parable of the unclean spirit who was cast out of his house and returned to it with seven other spirits more wicked than himself.

21. *For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness*] The verb for "known" is, like the noun in the preceding verse, that which implies the fullest form of knowledge, as in 1 Cor. xiii. 12; 2 Cor. vi. 9; 1 Tim. iv. 3. The "way of righteousness" is like the "way of truth" in verse 2, a comprehensive description of the religion of Christ as a whole, regarded here in its bearing on life, as there in its relation to belief.

delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them ac- 22
cording to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and, The sow that was washed to *her* wallowing in the mire.

This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in 3
both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remem-

to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them] The word "delivered" implies, as in Luke i. 2; 1 Cor. xi. 2, 23, xv. 3; Jude, verse 3, the oral teaching of the elements of Christian faith and life which was imparted to all converts prior to their baptism. Stress is laid on the "commandment" because the Apostle is contemplating chiefly the sins of impurity of which the heresiarchs had been guilty rather than their dogmatic heresies as such.

22. *it is happened unto them according to the true proverb...*] Literally, **that (saying) of the true proverb has happened to them...** In the words that follow we have another of St Peter's references, without a formal citation, to the Book of Proverbs (xxvi. 11). See notes on 1 Pet. iv. 8, v. 5. The form in which he gives the proverbs is participial. "The dog returned to his own vomit; the washed sow to her wallowing in the mire." We have, however, the colloquial, allusive form which the proverb had assumed in common speech rather than an actual quotation, and the second part of the proverb is not found in the passage referred to. In both cases stress is laid on the fact that there had been a real change. The dog had ejected what was foul; the sow had washed herself, but the old nature returned in both cases. Those who after their baptism returned to the impurities they had renounced, were, in the Apostle's eyes, no better than the unclean beasts. In the union of the two types of baseness we may, perhaps, trace a reminiscence of our Lord's teaching in Matt. vii. 6.

CHAPTER III.

1. *This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you*] A new section of the Epistle opens. The "false teachers" recede from view, and the thoughts of the Apostle turn to the mockers who made merry at the delay of the coming of the Lord, to which Christians had so confidently looked forward as nigh at hand. In the stress laid on this being the "*second* Epistle" we have a fact which compels us to choose between identity of authorship for both Epistles, or a deliberate imposture as regards the second.

I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance] The word for "pure" is found in Phil. i. 10, the corresponding noun in 1 Cor. v. 8; 2 Cor. i. 12, ii. 17. Its primary application is to that which will bear the full test of being examined by sunlight, and so it carries with it the sense of a *transparent* sincerity. Its exact opposite is described in Eph. iv. 18, "having the understanding" (the same Greek word as that here rendered "mind") darkened. In the "stirring up by way of remembrance" we have a phrase that had been used before (chap. i. 13).

2 brance: that *ye* may be mindful of the words which were
spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the command-
3 ment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: knowing
this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers,
4 walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the pro-
mise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all *things*

2. *the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets*] The conjunction of "prophets" and "apostles" here is so entirely after the pattern of the like combination in Eph. ii. 20, iii. 5, iv. 11, that there can scarcely be a doubt that the writer meant at least to include the New Testament prophets who had spoken of the coming of the Lord, and whose predictions were now derided.

the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour] The better MSS., with an overwhelming weight of authority, give **of your Apostles.** It is obvious that the reading thus supported gives a special interest to the words. They are a distinct recognition like that in 1 Pet. v. 12, and here in verse 15, of the Apostleship of St Paul and his fellow-workers. The Asiatic Churches were to remember *his* commandment (such, for example, as the rule of life in Eph. iv.—vi.), and to fashion their lives accordingly.

3. *knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers*] The better MSS. give the emphatic Hebrew idiom of reduplication (comp. Gen. xxii. 17), **scoffers shall come in their scoffing.** The first noun is found only here and in the parallel passage of Jude, ver. 18; the latter, here only.

walking after their own lusts, and saying...] This is given as the ground of their mocking temper. The habit of self-indulgence is at all times the natural parent of the cynical and scoffing sneer.

4. *Where is the promise of his coming?*] The question indicates the comparatively late date of the Epistle. St James had spoken (probably A. D. 50) of the Judge as standing at the door; St Paul had written twice as if he expected to be living on the earth when the Judge should come (1 Thess. iv. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 51; 2 Cor. v. 4), and yet He came not. Men began to think that the Coming was a delusion.

for since the fathers fell asleep] Ordinarily, the "fathers," as in Rom. ix. 5, would carry our thoughts back to the great progenitors of Israel as a people. Here, however, the stress laid by the mockers on the death of the fathers as the starting-point of the frustrated expectation, seems to give the word another application, and we may see in the "fathers" the first generation of the disciples of Christ, those who had "fallen asleep" without seeing the Advent they had looked for (1 Thess. iv. 15); those who had reached the "end of their conversation" (Heb. xiii. 7). The scoffers appealed to the continuity of the natural order of things. Seed-time and harvest, summer and winter, followed as they had done from the beginning of the creation. In the last phrase we may trace an echo of Mark x. 6, xiii. 19. "You have told us," they seem to have said, "of an affliction such as there has not been from the beginning of the crea-

continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation. For 5
this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God
the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the
water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, 6

tion, and lo! we find the world still goes on as of old, with no great catastrophe." The answer to the sneer St Peter gives himself, but it may be noted that the question of the scoffers at least implies the early date of the writings in which the expectation of the Coming is prominent.

In the use of the verb to "fall asleep" for dying, we are reminded of our Lord's words "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth" (John xi. 11); of St Paul's "many sleep" (1 Cor. xi. 30). So in Greek sculpture Death and Sleep appear as twin genii, and in Greek and Roman epitaphs nothing is more common than the record that the deceased "sleeps" below. Too often there is the addition, as of those who were without hope, "sleeps an eternal sleep." In Christian language the idea of sleep is perpetuated in the term "cemetery" (κοιμητήριον=sleeping-place) as applied to the burial-place of the dead, but it is blended with that of an "awaking out of sleep" at the last day, and even with the thought, at first seemingly incompatible with it, that the soul is quickened into higher energies of life on its entrance into the unseen world.

5. *For this they willingly are ignorant of*] More accurately, **For this is hid from them by their own will.** The English phrase "they ignore" exactly expresses the state of mind of which the Apostle speaks. The ignorance of the scoffers was self-chosen. They closed their eyes to the truth that the law of continuity on which they laid stress was not without exception. There had been a great catastrophe in the past. There might yet be a great catastrophe in the future.

that by the word of God the heavens were of old] The history of the creative work in Gen. i. furnishes the first example that the order of the universe was not one of unbroken continuity of evolution. In "the word of God" we may see a reference either (1) to the continually recurring formula "God said" in Gen. i. 3, 6, 9, or (2) to the thought that it was by the Eternal Word that the work of Creation was accomplished, as in John i. 3; Heb. i. 2; and we have no sufficient data for deciding between the two. Heb. xi. 3 ("the worlds were framed by the word of God") is exactly parallel to St Peter's language, and is open to the same diversity of interpretation. In any case the words are a protest against the old Epicurean view of a concourse of atoms, and its modern counterpart, the theory of a perpetual evolution.

and the earth standing out of the water and in the water] More accurately, **and the earth formed out of water and by means of water.** The words carry us back, as before, to the cosmogony of Gen. i. The earth was brought out of chaos into its present *kosmos*, by the water being gathered into one place and the dry land appearing (Gen. i. 9). It was kept together by the separation of the waters above the firmament from those that were below the firmament (Gen. i. 6). The Apostle speaks naturally from the standpoint of the physical science of his time

7 being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and
the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in
store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and
8 perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant

and country, and we need not care to reconcile either his words or those of Gen. i. with the conclusions of modern meteorological science. The equivalent fact in the language of that science would be that the permanence of the existing order of the world is secured by the circulation of water, rising in evaporation, and falling in the form of rain, between the higher and lower regions of the atmosphere, and that there must have been a time when this circulation began to supervene on a previous state of things that depended on different conditions.

6. *whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished*] The "whereby" is not without its difficulties. Does it refer to the whole fact of creation described in the previous verse, or to the two regions in which the element of water was stored up? On the whole, the latter has most in its favour. In the deluge, as described in Gen. vii. 11, the "fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened," and so the waters above and those below the firmament were both instruments in the work of judgment. The stress laid on the same fact here and in 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20 is, as far as it goes, an evidence in favour of identity of authorship. In the use of the word "perished," or "was destroyed," we have a proof, not to be passed over, as bearing indirectly upon other questions of dogmatic importance, that the word does not carry with it the sense of utter destruction or annihilation, but rather that of a change, or breaking up, of an existing order. It is obvious that this meaning is that which gives the true answer to those who inferred from the continuity of the order of nature that there could be no catastrophic change in the future.

7. *but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word*] Some of the better MSS. give **by His word**, but the received reading rests on sufficient authority.

are kept in store, reserved unto fire] Literally, **are treasured up.** The use of the word in reference to punishment has a parallel in Rom. ii. 5. In naming "fire" as the instrument of that "destruction" of the existing framework of the world, which is, like that by water, to be the starting-point of a new and purified order, the Apostle follows in the track of 2 Thess. i. 8, and Dan. vii. 9—11. It may be noted, though not as pointing to the source from which the Apostle derived his belief, that this destruction of the world by fire entered into the physical teaching of the Stoics. It is not without interest to note that it was specially prominent in the teaching of Zeno of Tarsus, who succeeded Chrysippus as the leading teacher of the School (Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* xv. 18). It appears also, in a book probably familiar to the Apostle, the Book of Enoch, c. xc. 11.

against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men] The word for "perdition" is the same as that rendered "destruction" in chap. ii. 1, and is identical in meaning with the verb "perished" in the preceding

of this one *thing*, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is 9
not slack concerning *his* promise, as some *men* count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any

verse. We cannot accordingly infer from it that the "ungodly" will cease to exist, but only that there will be a great and penal change in their condition. An interesting parallel to the teaching of this passage, probably in great part derived from it, is found in an Oration of Melito of Sardis, translated from the Syriac by Dr Cureton in A.D. 1855. "There was a flood of water:... There will be a flood of fire, and the earth will be burnt up together with its mountains.....and the just shall be delivered from its fury, as their fellows in the Ark were saved from the waters of the Deluge."

8. *But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing*] Literally, the construction being the same as in ver. 5, **let not this one thing be hidden from you.**

that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years...] The latter clause has its origin in the words of the Psalmist, "A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday" (Ps. xc. 4); but while the Psalmist dwells only on the littleness of our greatest time-measures, the Apostle completes the thought by joining with it the possible greatness of that which to our sight is almost infinitely little. "A day" (probably with special reference to the day of judgment) may be pregnant with results for the spiritual history of mankind or of an individual soul as great as those of a millennium. The delay of a millennium may be but as a day in the evolution of the great purposes of God. The words have the additional interest of having impressed themselves as a "faithful saying" or axiom of religious thought on the minds of the apostolic age, and are quoted as such in the Epistle that bears the name of Barnabas (chap. xv.). This forms the second answer of the Apostle to the sneering question of the mockers.

9. *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness...*] We enter here on the third answer, and it rests on the purpose which was working through what men looked on as a delay in the fulfilment of the promise. That purpose was one of love and mercy. It was not slackness or tardiness, but "long-suffering." We note, as an evidence of identity of authorship, the recurrence of the thought which we have found in 1 Pet. iii. 20. The "long-suffering of God" which had shewn itself then, as in the history of Gen. vi. 3, in the delay of a hundred and twenty years between the first prophetic warning of the coming judgment and the actual deluge, was manifested now in the interval, longer than the first disciples had anticipated, between the first and the second comings of the Christ. We ask, as we read the words, whether the Apostle, as he wrote them, contemplated the period of well-nigh two thousand years which has passed since without the expected Advent; and we have no adequate data for answering that question. It may well have been that though the horizon was receding as he looked into the future, it was still not given to him "to know

10 should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But
the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the
which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and
the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and
11 the works that are therein shall be burnt up. Seeing then

the times and the seasons" (Acts i. 7), and that he still thought that the day of the Lord would come within much narrower limits, perhaps, even, in the lifetime of that generation. But the answer which he gives is the true answer to all doubts and questions such as then presented themselves, to reproductions of the like questions now. However long the interval, though it be for a period measured by millenniums, there is still the thought that this is but as a moment in the years of eternity, and that through that lengthened period, on earth or behind the veil, there is working the purpose of God, who doth not will that any should perish (comp. 1 Tim. ii. 4; Ezek. xviii. 23), but that all should come to repentance. Here again the word "perish" does not mean simple annihilation, but the state which is the opposite of salvation.

10. *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night...*] The confidence of the Apostle that this will be the end of the history of the human race is not shaken by the seeming "slackness" in its approach. Either reproducing the thought which he had heard from his Master's lips (Matt. xxiv. 43), or echoing the very words of St Paul (1 Thess. v. 2), he declares that it will come, and will come suddenly, when men are not looking for it.

the heavens shall pass away with a great noise] The last four words answer to one Greek adverb, not found elsewhere, which implies the "whizzing" or "rushing" sound of an arrow hurtling through the air (Hom. *Il.* xvi. 361). The "heavens" (in the plural, after the common mode of speech both in the Old and New Testament) shall, in that great day, be the scene of a great convulsion. We have here obviously the same thought as in Matt. xxiv. 29, but the mind of the Apostle, now rising to the character of an apocalyptic seer, beholds in that convulsion not a work of destruction only, but one of renovation. Comp. a like picture of the end of the world's history in Rev. xx. 11, xxi. 1.

the elements shall melt with fervent heat] The word "elements" may possibly stand for what were so called in some of the physical theories of the time, the fire, air, earth, water, out of which all existing phenomena were believed to be evolved (comp. Wisd. xix. 18). The word was, however, used a little later on for what we call the "heavenly bodies," sun, moon, and stars (Justin Mart. *Apol.* II. 4. 4), and that meaning, seeing that the "elements" are distinguished from the "earth," and that one of the four elements is to be the instrument of destruction, is probably the meaning here.

the earth also and the works that are therein] The use of the word "works" suggests the thought that the Apostle had chiefly in view all that man had wrought out on the surface of the globe; his cities, palaces, monuments, or the like. The comprehensive term may, how-

that all these *things shall* be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting *unto* the coming of the day of God, [12] wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless [13] we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and

ever, include "works" as the "deeds" of men, of which St Paul says that they shall all be tried by fire (1 Cor. iii. 13).

11. *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved*] Literally, **Seeing therefore that all these things are being dissolved.** The Greek participle is in the present tense, and is probably used to convey the thought that even now the fabric of the earth is on its way to the final dissolution. If with some of the better MSS. we read "shall **thus** be dissolved," instead of "then," the participle must be taken as more definitely future, being coupled, as in that case it must be, with the manner as well as the fact of the dissolution.

ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness] It should be noted, though it cannot well be expressed in English, that both the Greek nouns are in the plural, as expressing all the manifold forms in which **holy living** (see note on 1 Pet. i. 15) and "godliness" shew themselves. The verb for "be" is that which emphatically expresses a permanent and continuous state. The thought implied is that the belief in the transitoriness of all that seems most enduring upon earth should lead, as a necessary consequence, to a life resting on the eternal realities of truth and holiness.

12. *looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God...*] The English versions follow the Vulgate and Luther in this rendering. It is doubtful, however, whether the Greek verb for "hasten," followed by an accusative without a preposition, can have this meaning, and its natural transitive force (as e.g. in the LXX. of Isai. xvi. 5, and Herod. I. 38) would give the sense **hastening the day.** So taken, the thought of the Apostle is that the "day of God" is not immutably fixed by a Divine decree, but may be accelerated by the readiness of His people or of mankind at large. In proportion to that readiness there is less occasion, if we may so speak, for the "long-suffering of God," to postpone the fulfilment of His promise.

wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved] More accurately, **on account of which,** viz. "the day of God," the destruction of the present order being for the sake of that which is to usher in a new and better state. On the words that follow see note on ver. 10, which is almost verbally reproduced. Micah i. 4 may be referred to as presenting the same picture of destruction.

13. *we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth*] The promise of which the Apostle speaks is that of Isai. lxv. 17, lxvi. 22, where we have the very words, "new heavens and a new earth," the context there connecting it with the restoration of Israel to their own land and the renewed glory of Jerusalem. The same hope

14 a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such *things*, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and
15 blameless. And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also accord-

shews itself in the visions of the Apocalypse (Rev. xxi. 1) as connected with the "new Jerusalem" coming down from God, and appears in a fuller and more expanded form in the Apocryphal Book of Enoch. "The former heaven shall pass away and a new heaven shall shew itself" (chap. xcii. 17). "The earth shall be cleansed from all corruption, from every crime, from all punishment" (c. x. 27).

wherein dwelleth righteousness] This again reproduces the thought of Isaiah (lxv. 25) that "they shall not hurt (LXX. "act unrighteously") nor destroy in all my holy mountain," and St John's account of the new Jerusalem that "there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth" (Rev. xxi. 27). It is implied in St Paul's belief that "the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption" (Rom. viii. 21). Earth itself, purified and redeemed, is to be the scene of the blessedness of the saved, as it has been, through the long æons of its existence, of sin and wretchedness.

14. *be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace...*] The language, like that of ver. 8, is that of one who still lives in the expectation that he and those to whom he writes may yet survive to witness the coming of the Lord. The hour of death has not yet taken the place in the Apostle's thoughts, as it has done since, of the day of that Coming. In the exhortation that men should be diligent (better, **be earnest**) to be found in peace at that day, we may trace an echo of our Lord's words, "Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing" (Matt. xxiv. 46). "Peace" is used in its widest Hebrew sense, as including every element of blessedness, peace with God, and therefore peace with man, the peace which Christ gives, not as the world gives (John xiv. 27), the peace which passes understanding (Phil. iv. 7).

without spot, and blameless...] The words are nearly identical with those which describe the character of Christ as "a lamb without blemish and without spot" in 1 Pet. i. 19, and their re-appearance is a fresh link in the chain of evidence as to identity of authorship. They who expect the coming of Christ should be like Him in their lives. The first of the two words may be noticed as used also by St James (i. 27).

15. *And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation*] The words have a pointed reference to ver. 9. Men were impatient, and counted the "long-suffering of God" as tardiness in the fulfilment of His promises. The true way of looking at it was to see in it the working out of His plan of salvation for all who should be willing to receive it. In the "long-suffering of *our Lord*" (obviously from ver. 18), the "Lord Jesus," we see a testimony, indirect but not the less explicit, to the full participation of the Son in the counsels and purposes of the Father.

even as our beloved brother Paul...] The words imply a full recognition

ing to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these *things;* 16 in which are some *things* hard to be understood, which *they that are* unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, 17

of St Paul's work as a brother in the Apostleship, and are in harmony, as has been noticed, with 1 Pet. v. 12; 2 Pet. i. 12, iii. 2.

according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you] As far as the subject-matter is concerned, 1 Thess. iv. v. and 2 Thess. ii. seem to correspond most closely with St Peter's reference, and as these were written when Silvanus was with St Paul (see note on 1 Pet. v. 12), there is strong ground for believing that St Peter would be acquainted with their contents. If, on the other hand, we restrict the words "hath written to *you*" to the Asiatic Churches to whom 1 Peter was addressed, we may think of Eph. i. 14, ii. 7, iii. 9—11; Col. i. 20, as referred to here, while the statements are included in the allusion in the next verse.

16. *as also in all his epistles*] The English represents the Greek accurately enough, but the absence of the article in the original should be noted as shewing that there was not yet any complete collection of St Paul's Epistles. All that can be legitimately inferred from the expression is that St Peter knew of other Epistles (probably 1 and 2 Thess., 1 and 2 Cor., and Romans) besides those—or that—to which he had referred in the preceding verse.

speaking in them of these things] i. e. of the coming of the Lord and of the end of the world. Here, on the assumption made in the previous verse, we may find a reference, as to 1 Thess. iv. v. and 2 Thess. ii.; so also to Rom. viii. 19—21, xiii. 11, 12; 1 Cor. iii. 13, iv. 5, xv. 51—54.

in which are some things hard to be understood] We are left to conjecture what these were. We might think of the mysterious predictions of "the man of sin" in 2 Thess. ii., or the doctrine of the "spiritual body" in 1 Cor. xv. 44, 2 Cor. v. 1—4, but it is not easy to see how these elements of St Paul's teaching could have been perverted to the destruction of men's spiritual life. On the whole, therefore, it seems more likely that the Apostle finds in the "unlearned and unstable" the party of license in the Apostolic Church, who claimed to be following St Paul's assertion of his freedom, by eating things sacrificed to idols and indulging in sins of impurity (see note on chap. ii. 19), or who quoted his words "that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. iii. 28) as sanctioning a profligate Antinomianism.

which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest...] Both words are peculiar to this Epistle in the New Testament. The latter had been used in chap. ii. 14. The word for "wrest" expresses the action of a windlass that twists what is submitted to its action.

as they do also the other scriptures] Few passages are more important than this in its bearing on the growth of the Canon of the New Testament. It shews (1) that the distinctive term of honour used of the books

beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from
13 your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen.

of the Old Testament was applied without reserve to St Paul's writings; (2) that probably other books now found in the Canon were also so recognised. The last inference, though it might be said that the "other Scriptures" did not necessarily mean other writings than those of the Old Testament Canon, is confirmed (1) by the use of the term "Scripture" as connected with a quotation from Luke x. 7 in 1 Tim. v. 18; (2) by St Paul's reference to "prophetic writings" or "Scriptures" as unfolding the mystery which had been hid from ages and generations in Rom. xvi. 26, and probably by the tests which he gives in 2 Tim. iii. 16 as the notes by which "every inspired Scripture, or writing," might be distinguished from its counterfeit. See notes bearing on this subject on 1 Pet. i. 10—12, iv. 11; 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.

17. *beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked*] Better, **of the lawless ones**, as in chap. ii. 7. It is noticeable that while St Paul had used the word for being "led away" of Barnabas as being influenced by the Judaizing teachers at Antioch (Gal. ii. 13), St Peter here applies it to those who were persuaded by teachers at the opposite pole of error. Comp. note on chap. ii. 1. The word for "error" is prominent in the Epistles to which St Peter has referred in the preceding verses (Eph. iv. 14; 1 Thess. ii. 3; 2 Thess. ii. 11).

fall from your own stedfastness] The "steadfastness" of the readers of the Epistle as contrasted with the *unstable* or *unsteadfast* of verse 16 is acknowledged; but they are warned that it requires care and watchfulness to preserve it. He does not assume any indefectible grace of perseverance. The tense of the verb in "lest ye fall" indicates that it would be a single and decisive act.

18. *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*] The final thought of the Epistle, like that with which it opened, is the growth of the Christian life. Here, as there (chap. i. 5), stress is laid on knowledge as an element of growth, partly as essential to completeness in the Christian life, partly also, perhaps, in reference to the "knowledge falsely so called" (1 Tim. vi. 20) of which the false teachers boasted.

To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen] The word "glory" in the Greek has the article, which makes it include all the glory which men were wont, in their doxologies, to ascribe to God. The Apostle has learnt the full meaning of the words "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father" (John v. 23). The effect of his teaching may be traced in the Churches to which the letter was mainly addressed, in Pliny's account of the worship of Christians in the Asiatic provinces, as including "a hymn sung to Christ as to God" (*Ep. ad Trajan.* 96). The Greek phrase for "for ever" (literally, **for the**

day of the æon, or **eternity**) is a peculiar one, and expresses the thought that "the day" of which the Apostle had spoken in verses 10 and 12 would be one which should last through the new æon that would then open, and to which no time-limits could be assigned.

The absence of any salutations, like those with which the First Epistle ended, is, perhaps, in part due to the wider and more encyclical character which marks the Second. The Apostle was content that his last words should be on the one hand an earnest entreaty that men should "grow" to completeness in their spiritual life, and, on the other, the ascription of an eternal glory to the Lord and Master whom he loved.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF

JUDE.

JUDE, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, 1
to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and pre-
served *in* Jesus Christ, *and* called: Mercy unto you, and 2
peace, and love, be multiplied.

1. *Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James*] The question who the writer was who thus describes himself has been discussed in the Introduction. Here it will be enough to note (1) that the use of the term "servant" does not exclude a claim to Apostleship (Rom. i. 1; Phil. i. 1); and (2) that it is the term used by the writer whom the author of this Epistle claims as his brother (James i. 1). This description of himself as "the brother of James" has no parallel in the New Testament. We might have expected "brother of the Lord," but probably he shrank from what might have seemed the boastfulness of so describing himself, or felt, perhaps, that that title was now inseparably connected with James, the Bishop of Jerusalem (Gal. i. 19). It may be inferred, without much risk of error, (1) that he wished, bearing so common a name, to distinguish himself from others, like Judas not Iscariot, of John xiv. 22, Luke vi. 16, the Lebbæus or Thaddæus of Matt. x. 3, Judas surnamed Barsabas (Acts xv. 22), and others.

to them that are sanctified by God the Father...] Literally, **sanctified in God the Father**, i.e. through union with Him, living in Him. Some of the better MSS., however, give "*beloved* in God," in which case the thought would be that they were the objects of the writer's love, not "according to the flesh," but with an emotion which had its source in God. So taken it would be analogous to the phrases "salute you much in the Lord" (1 Cor. xvi. 19), or, "rejoice in the Lord" (Phil. iv. 4).

and preserved in Jesus Christ...] The tense of the participle in the Greek implies a completed act continuing in its results. The word may be noted as specially characteristic of the later Epistles. We have it in 1 Pet. i. 4; 2 Pet. ii. 4, 9, 17, iii. 7; eight times in 1 John; four times in Jude. In the sense in which it is used here, it is probably connected with the fact of the delay in the second Advent of the Lord, and was chosen to indicate that those who were waiting patiently for it were being kept or guarded by their union with Christ.

and called] The idea runs through the whole of the New Testa-

3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you
of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write
unto you, and exhort *you* that *ye* should earnestly contend
4 for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For

ment. The word appears in Matt. xx. 16, xxii. 14 as contrasted with "chosen" or "elect," in Rom. i. 1, 6, 7, viii. 28 as the sequel of a predetermining election. Each aspect of the word must be kept in mind.

2. *Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied*] The salutation corresponds with that of 1 Pet. i. 2; 2 Pet. i. 2, with the substitution of "mercy" for "grace" (the two are united in 1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2; Tit. i. 4), and the addition, as in the latter passages, of "peace."

3. *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation...*] More accurately, **giving all diligence**, as a present act connected with the time of writing. The word for "diligence," as with the cognate verb in 2 Pet. i. 10, 15, iii. 14, implies earnest effort. The term "common salvation," not elsewhere found in the New Testament, has a parallel in the "common faith" of Tit. i. 4. In both passages stress is laid on the "faith," or the "salvation," as being that in which all Christians were sharers, as distinct from the "knowledge" which was claimed by false teachers as belonging only to a few.

it was needful for me to write unto you] Better, perhaps, **I found a necessity.** The ground of the necessity lies in the fact stated in the next verse. The words have been interpreted as meaning that he was about to write a fuller or more general Epistle, and was then diverted from his purpose by the urgent need for a protest against the threatening errors; and the inference, though not, perhaps, demonstrable, is at least legitimate, and derives some support from the change of tense (which the English version fails to represent) in the two infinitives, the first "to write" being in the present tense, such as might be used of a general purpose, the second in the aorist, as pointing to an immediate and special act.

that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints] The simple form of the verb for "contend" is found in Col. i. 29, iv. 12, and implies, as it were, "wrestling" for the faith. This expression finds a close parallel in the "striving together for the faith" of Phil. i. 27. "Faith" is obviously to be taken in its objective sense, as being, so to speak, the belief of the Universal Church. And this faith is described as being "**once for all** delivered to the saints." It was not necessarily embodied as yet in a formal Creed, or committed to writing, but was imparted orally to every convert, and took its place among the "traditions" of the Church (2 Thess. ii. 15, iii. 6), the **noble deposit,** "the good thing committed to their trust" which all pastors and teachers were to watch over and pass on to others (2 Tim. i. 14), identical with the "form of sound words" (2 Tim. i. 13). In the words that describe the "mystery of godliness" in 1 Tim. iii. 16, and in the "faithful sayings" of the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. i. 15, iii. 1, iv. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 11; Tit. iii. 8), we have probably portions of this traditional faith. It was now imperilled by teachers who denied it, both in their doctrine

there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly *men*, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore 5
put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how

and their life, and it was necessary that men should redouble their efforts to maintain it unimpaired.

4. *For there are certain men crept in unawares...*] More literally, **For there crept in unawares certain men**... There is a touch of contempt in the way in which, as in Gal. ii. 4, 2 Pet. ii. 1, the false teachers are referred to without being named. Here also, as there, stress is laid on their making their way into the Church insidiously, and, as it were, under false pretences. The words that follow have often been urged as giving a sanction to the Calvinistic theory of a Divine decree predestining men to condemnation, but it is against this view that the word "of old" is never used in the New Testament of the Divine Counsels, which are in their very nature eternal, and are commonly indicated by such words as "before the foundation of the world" (Eph. i. 4), "from the beginning of the world" (Acts xv. 18), the "eternal purpose" (Eph. iii. 11) and the like. The Greek word for "of old" may, on the contrary, be used of even a recent past, as in Mark xv. 44, 2 Pet. i. 9. Nor does the Greek word for "ordained" express the thought of a decree like that of the Calvinistic theory, but rather of a public designation, as in Gal. iii. 1. St Jude's words accordingly are adequately rendered by **who were long ago before marked out as on their way to this condemnation**, and may refer to previous prophetic utterances like those of 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, or 2 Pet. ii. 1, which had already pointed to such men as the coming danger of the Church.

turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness] The description agrees with that in 2 Pet. ii. 18, 19, in pointing to the party who under the pretence of magnifying the grace of God (Rom. vi. 1), and asserting their Christian liberty, led base and licentious lives, the party, i. e., condemned alike by St Paul (1 Cor. vi. 9—18), by St Peter (2 Pet. ii.) and by St John (1 John iii. 7—10). See notes on 2 Pet. ii.

denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ] The better MSS. omit the word "God," and as the Greek word for the first "Lord" is that used in 2 Pet. ii. 1 (see note there), we are probably justified in applying it also to Christ. On that view, or indeed in any case, it would be better to express the distinction between the two terms by translating, **the only Master and Lord Jesus Christ.** The "denial" spoken of is two-fold, both in doctrine, as in 1 John ii. 22, 23, or in life, but the context shews that stress is laid chiefly on the latter.

5. *I will therefore put you in remembrance*] More accurately, **I wish to put you in remembrance**, or, **to remind you.** The language presupposes, like that of 2 Pet. i. 12, to which it presents a close parallel, the previous instruction of the readers of the Epistle in the faith once delivered to the saints.

though ye once knew this] The better MSS. give "knew all things,"

that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of
6 Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And
the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their
own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under

reminding us of "ye know all things" of 1 John ii. 20. The word is limited in both cases, by the context, to all the essential elements of Christian faith and duty.

how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt] The MSS. present a curious variation of reading, some giving "the Lord," some "Jesus," and some "God." St Paul's use of the name of "Christ" in 1 Cor. x. 4 is, in some sense, parallel to that of "Jesus," which seems, on the whole, the best-supported reading. The reference to the judgment that fell upon Israel in the wilderness takes the place of that drawn from the flood in 2 Pet. ii. 5, and may, perhaps, be traced to St Paul's way of dealing with that history in 1 Cor. x. 1—10, or to Heb. iii. 12—19.

afterward] More literally, **secondly**, or **in the second place.**

6. *And the angels which kept not their first estate*] The two last words answer to a Greek term which may either mean "beginning," i. e. their original constitution, the meaning adopted in the English version, or "sovereignty." The latter sense may mean either that they rejected the sovereignty of God, or that they abandoned the position of power and dignity which He had assigned them. Looking to the fact that the term is used in the New Testament, as by Jewish writers, as describing a class of angels (the "principalities" of Eph. i. 21, iii. 10, vi. 12; Col. i. 16, ii. 15), the latter explanation is probably the true one. On the nature of the sin referred to, see notes on 2 Pet. ii. 4.

but left their own habitation] As this is named as the sin, not as the punishment, it seems to imply a descent from the region of heaven to that of earth, like that implied in the language of Gen. vi. 2.

he hath reserved in everlasting chains...] The words, like those of 2 Pet. ii. 4, seem to indicate a distinction between the angels who were thus punished, and the "demons" or "unclean spirits" with Satan at their head, who exercise a permitted power as the tempters, accusers, and destroyers of mankind, the "world-rulers of this darkness" of Eph. vi. 12, who even "in heavenly places" carry on their warfare against the souls of men. It is possible that St Jude recognised such a distinction. His language, like that of St Peter, follows the traditions of the Book of Enoch, which speaks of fallen angels as kept in their prison-house till the day of judgment (xxii. 4), and those which are represented by the *Midrasch Ruth* in the *Book of Zohar*, "After that the sons of God had begotten sons, God took them and brought them to the mount of darkness and bound them in chains of darkness which reach to the middle of the great abyss." A fuller form of the Rabbinic legend relates that the angels Asa and Asael charged God with folly in having created man who so soon provoked Him, and that He answered that if they had been on earth they would have sinned as man had done. "And thereupon He allowed them to descend to earth, and they sinned with

darkness unto the judgment of the great day. *Even* as 7
Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them, in like manner giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these *filthy* dream- 8
ers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dig-

the daughters of men. And when they would have returned to Heaven they could not, for they were banished from their former habitation and brought into the dark mountains of the earth" (*Nischmath Chaim* in Nork's *Rabbinische Quellen und Parallelen*). The resemblance between this tradition and that of the Zoroastrian legend of the fall of Ahriman and his angels, and again of the punishment of the Titans by Zeus in the mythology of Hesiod (*Theogon.* 729), shews the wide-spread currency of the belief referred to. How far this allusive reference to a tradition which the writers accepted stamps it with a Divine authority as an article of faith is a question the answer to which depends on external considerations as to the nature of the inspiration by which the writers who so referred were guided. The office of the interpreter is limited to stating what, as far as can be gathered, was actually in the thoughts of the writer.

7. *the cities about them, in like manner...going after strange flesh*] The words describe the form of evil for which the cities of the plain have become a byword of infamy. In saying that this sin was like that of the angels, it is clearly implied that in the latter case also there was a degradation of nature, such as is emphasized in the words that "the sons of God went in unto the daughters of men" (Gen. vi. 4). Impurity, and not simply or chiefly pride, as in the mediæval traditions represented in the poems of Cædmon and Milton, is thought of as the leading feature in the fall of the angels (*Book of Enoch*, c. 9).

suffering the vengeance of eternal fire] The words imply a reference to something more than the natural phenomena of the Dead Sea region. The fire which had destroyed them is thought of as being still their doom, as permanent as the "eternal fire" of Matt. xxv. 41. For "vengeance," which admits of a bad as well as a good meaning, it might be better to read "just punishment."

8. *Likewise also these filthy dreamers...*] More accurately, **these men dreaming defile the flesh.** The English version follows many commentators in suggesting the thought that the words describe the kind of sensual dreams which lead to the pollution described in Lev. xv. 16, 17. This meaning, however, does not lie in the word itself, and as the participle is, by the construction of the sentence, equally connected with all of the three verbs that follow, it is better to see in it a simple description of the dreaming, visionary character of the false teachers. They lived, as it were, in a dream (perhaps exulted in their clairvoyant visions), and the result was seen in impurity like that of the cities of the plain, in "despising dominion" and "speaking evil of dignities." On the questions presented by the two last clauses, see notes on 2 Pet. ii. 10.

9 nities. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not

9. *Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil...*] It is obvious, from the manner in which St Jude writes, that he assumes that the fact to which he refers was familiar to his readers. No tradition, however, precisely corresponding with this statement is found in any Rabbinic or apocryphal book now extant, not even in the Book of Enoch, from which he has drawn so largely in other instances (verses 6, 14). Œcumenius indeed, writing in the tenth century, reports a tradition that Michael was appointed to minister at the burial of Moses, and that the devil urged that his murder of the Egyptian (Exod. ii. 12) had deprived him of the right of sepulture, and Origen (*de Princ.* III. 2) states that the record of the dispute was found in a lost apocryphal book known as the Assumption of Moses, but in both these instances it is possible that the traditions may have grown out of the words of St Jude instead of being the foundation on which they rested. Rabbinic legends, however, though they do not furnish the precise fact to which St Jude refers, shew that a whole cycle of strange fantastic stories had gathered round the brief mysterious report of the death of Moses in Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6, and it will be worth while to give some of these as shewing their general character. Thus, in the Targum, or Paraphrase, of Jonathan on Deuteronomy it is stated that the grave of Moses was given over to the special custody of the Archangel Michael. In the *Debarim Rabba* i.e. the *Midrash* on Deuteronomy (fol. 263), it is related that Sammael, the prince of the Evil Angels, was impatient for the death of Moses. "And he said, 'When will the longed-for moment come when Michael shall weep and I shall laugh?' And at last the time came when Michael said to Sammaël, 'Ah! cursed one! Shall I weep while thou laughest?' and made answer in the words of Micah, 'Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me'" (Mic. vii. 8). A longer and wilder legend is given in the same book (fol. 246), which must be somewhat abridged. "Moses prayed that if he might not enter into the Promised Land, he might at least be allowed to live; but God told him that unless he died in this world he could have no life in the world to come, and commanded Gabriel to fetch his soul. Gabriel shrank from the task. Michael was next bidden to go, and he too shrank; and then the command was given to Sammael, who found him with his face shining as the light, and he was afraid and trembled. He told him why he was come, and Moses asked him who had sent him, and he made answer that he was sent by the Creator of the Universe. But Moses still held out, and Sammael returned with his task unfulfilled. And Moses prayed, 'Lord of the World, give not my soul over to the Angel of Death.' And there came a voice from Heaven, 'Fear not, Moses, I will provide for thy burial,' and Moses stood up and sanctified himself as do the Seraphim, and the Most High came down from Heaven and the three chief angels with Him. Michael prepared the bier and Gabriel spread out the winding sheet.... And the Most High kissed him, and through that kiss took

bring against *him* a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. But these speak evil of those *things* which 10
they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute

his soul to Himself" (Nork, *Rabbinische Quellen*). It is suggestive that the sin of the angels comes prominently forward in connexion with the legend. The soul of Moses pleads its reluctance to leave the body which was so holy: "Lord of the world! The angels Asa and Asael lusted after the daughters of men, but Moses, from the day Thou appearedst unto him in the bush, led a life of perpetual continence."

It is clear from these extracts that there was something like a floating cycle of legendary traditions connected with the death of the great Lawgiver, and it is a natural inference that St Jude's words refer to one of these then popularly received. It is scarcely within the limits of probability that anything in the nature of a really primitive tradition could have been handed down from generation to generation, through fifteen hundred years, without leaving the slightest trace in a single passage of the Old Testament; nor is it more probable to assume, as some have done, that the writer of the Epistle had received a special revelation disclosing the fact to him. His tone in speaking of the fact is plainly that of one who assumes that his readers are familiar with it. The question whether in thus mentioning it he stamps it with the character of an actual fact in the history of the unseen world, will depend, as has been said above, upon the conclusion we have formed as to the nature of the inspiration under which the writers of the New Testament thought and wrote. Most thoughtful students of Scripture are now agreed that that inspiration did not necessarily convey an infallible power of criticising the materials of history and distinguishing popular belief from contemporary records; and there is nothing, therefore, irreverent in the thought that St Jude may have referred incidentally to a legend which he saw no reason to question, and which supplied an apposite illustration. In comparing this allusion with the parallel passage in 2 Pet. ii. 11, the thought suggests itself that the Apostle may have deliberately avoided what appeared to him unauthorized additions to the Sacred Records, and so worded his exhortation as to make it refer to what he found in Zech. iii. 2.

a railing accusation] The Greek phrase, literally **a judgment**, or **charge**, of **blasphemy**, though not absolutely identical with that in 2 Pet. ii. 11, has substantially the same meaning, not "an accusation of blasphemy," but one characterised by reviling.

10. *But these speak evil of those things which they know not...*] The context leaves no doubt that the region of the "things which they know not" is that of good and evil spirits. The false teachers were, though in another spirit, "intruding into those things which they had not seen," like those whom St Paul condemns in Col. ii. 18.

but what they know naturally, as brute beasts...] There is an obvious reference to the natural impulses of sensual desire which the false teachers did understand only too well, but which they perverted either to the mere gratification of lust, or, as the words and the context seem

11 beasts, in those *things* they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

12 These are spots in your feasts of charity when they

to indicate, to that gratification in a manner which was contrary to the laws of nature. If we would understand the burning vehemence of the writer's language, we must picture to ourselves the horror which he would feel at finding sins like those of Rom. i. 26, 27 reproduced among those who claimed to be followers of Christ, transcending others in their knowledge of the mysteries of the faith.

11. *Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain...*] We ask naturally what was the point of comparison. Probably in the case of those who were in the writer's thoughts, as in most others, "lust" was "hard by hate," and the false teachers were murderous and malignant, as well as sensual. The reference to Cain in 1 John iii. 12 indicates that his name was used to point a moral as to the issue of the "evil works" in the spirit of hatred and of murder. Possibly, however, here also the writer may have had in his thoughts some of the Rabbinic legends which represented Cain as the offspring, not of Adam, but of Sammael, the Evil Spirit, and Eve, and as the parent of other evil spirits (Eisenmenger's *Entdeckt. Judenthum*, I. 832, II. 428), and therefore as connected with the idea of foul and unnatural impurity.

ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward] See notes on 2 Pet. ii. 15. Here, as there, the main thought connected with the name of Balaam is that of the sin of uncleanness into which the Israelites were led by him.

and perished in the gainsaying of Core] i. e. by a gainsaying which was in its nature identical with that of Korah in Num. xvi. Completing the parallel thus suggested it is obvious that as the false teachers answer to Korah and his company, so the true apostles and prophets of the Church of Christ are thought of as occupying a position like that of Aaron or Moses. The Greek word for "gainsaying" is the LXX. equivalent for the "Meribah" of Num. xx. 13, 24. A strange Rabbinic legend, while it placed the souls of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in Gehenna, represented them as not tormented there (Eisenmenger, *Entdeckt. Judenthum*, II. 342).

12. *These are spots in your feasts of charity*] Here also, as in 2 Pet. ii. 13, the MSS. vary between "deceits" (ἀπάταις) and "feasts of charity, or *love*" (ἀγάπαις), but the evidence preponderates for the latter reading. Some MSS., including the Sinaitic, insert the words "these are murmurers...," which now stand in verse 16, at the beginning of this verse. The word rendered "spots" (σπιλάδες) is not the same as that in 2 Pet. ii. 13 (σπῖλοι), and in other Greek writers has the sense of "reefs" or "rocks below the sea." It is possible that St Jude may have looked on the two words as identical in meaning, but it is obvious, on the other hand, that the word "rocks," though it suggests a different image, gives a perfectly adequate sense to the whole passage. The false

feast with *you*, feeding themselves without fear: clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by

impure teachers who presented themselves undetected in the Christian love-feasts were as sunken rocks, and, if men were not on their guard, they might easily, by contact with them, "make shipwreck" of their faith (1 Tim. i. 19). On these love-feasts and their relation to the life of the Apostolic Church see notes on 2 Pet. ii. 13.

when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear] Better, **feasting with you without fear, pasturing themselves.** The adverb is more naturally joined in the Greek with the participle that precedes it, and the English "feeding," suggesting, as it does, in this context simply the act of eating, fails to give the force of the Greek word for "feed," which, as being that used in Acts xx. 28, 1 Pet. v. 2, expresses the idea of the pastoral office. What St Jude means is that these teachers of impurity, instead of submitting themselves to the true "pastors" of the Church, came in, like the false shepherds of Ezek. xxxiv. 1, 2, 8, 10, to "feed themselves," i. e. to indulge their own lusts in defiance of authority.

clouds they are without water] The "clouds" take the place of the "wells" of 2 Pet. ii. 17. The difference of imagery makes it probable that there may have been a difference of a like kind in the previous verse, and so far confirms the interpretation as to the "rocks" in the first clause of the verse. A like comparison is found in Prov. xxv. 14 ("Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain"). Men look in the hot climate of the East to the cloud as giving promise of the rain from heaven. It is a bitter disappointment when it passes away leaving the earth hard and unrefreshed as before. So men would look in vain to these false teachers, shifting alike in their movements and their teaching, borne to and fro by "every wind of doctrine" (comp. Eph. iv. 14), for any spiritual refreshment.

trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit] Literally, **autumn-withering trees.** This may mean either simply "autumnal trees," as "in the sere and yellow leaf" that is the forerunner of decay, or "trees that wither just at the very season when men look for fruit," and which are therefore fit symbols of the false teachers who are known "by their fruits." The use of a cognate word in Pindar (*Pyth.* v. 161) suggests, however, that the part of the compound word that corresponds to "autumn" may, like our "harvest," be taken as a collective expression for the fruits of that season, and so the term, as used by St Jude, would mean "trees that wither and blight their fruit instead of bringing it to maturity." The addition of "without fruit" is accordingly not a mere rhetorical iteration, but states the fact that the withering process was complete. The parable implied in the description was familiar to the disciples from the teaching both of John the Baptist and our Lord (Matt. iii. 10, vii. 16—20; Luke xiii. 6—9, and the Miracle of the Barren Fig-tree, Matt. xxi. 19).

twice dead] Better, **that have died twice,** stress being laid on the repetition of the act of dying. It is not easy to fix the precise meaning

13 the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness
14 of darkness for ever. And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh

of the phrase, either as it affects the outward imagery or the interpretation of the parable which it involves. Probably the tree is thought to die once when it ceases to bear fruit, and a second time when the sap ceases to circulate and there is no possibility of revival. So with the false teachers, there was first the blighting of the early promise of their knowledge of the truth, and then the entire loss of all spiritual life. The end of such trees was that they were "rooted up" and cast into the fire (Matt. iii. 10). In the interpretation of the parable, this may refer to the sentence of excommunication by which such offenders were excluded from fellowship with the Christian society, or to the judgment of God as confirming, or, it may be, anticipating that sentence.

13. *raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame*] Image follows on image to paint the shameless enormities of the false teachers. In this we trace an echo of the thought, though not of the words, of Isai. lvii. 20. The same image meets us, though in a milder form, and to express a different type of spiritual evil, in James i. 6. The Greek word for "shame" is in the plural, as indicating the manifold forms of the impurity of the false teachers.

wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever] The latter words are parallel to 2 Pet. ii. 17. The word for "wandering stars" is that which in the terminology of astronomy distinguishes the "planets" from the fixed stars. Here, however, the ordered regularity of planetary motion supplies no fit point of comparison, and we may probably see in the words a reference either to comets or shooting stars, whose irregular appearance, startling and terrifying men, and then vanishing into darkness, would present an analogue to the short-lived fame and baleful influence of the false teachers whom St Jude has in view. They too were drifting away into the eternal darkness.

14. *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these...*] The words that follow are almost a verbal quotation from the Apocryphal Book of Enoch. As that work had probably been in existence for a century before St Jude wrote, and was easily accessible, it is more natural to suppose that he quoted here, as in previous instances, what he thought edifying, than to adopt either of the two strained hypotheses, (1) that the writer had received what he quotes through a tradition independent of the Book of Enoch, that tradition having left no trace of itself in any of the writings of the Old Testament, or (2) that he was guided by a special inspiration to set the stamp of authenticity upon the one genuine prophecy which the apocryphal writer had imbedded in a mass of fantastic inventions. On the general question raised by this use of apocryphal material, see the Introduction to this Epistle; and for the history and contents of the Book of Enoch, the Excursus at the end of this volume. In the description of Enoch as the "*seventh* from Adam" there is probably a mystical symbolism. As being such he

with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon 15
all, and to convince all *that are* ungodly among them of all
their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed,
and of all *their* hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have
spoken against him.

These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their 16
own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling *words*,

became typical of the great Sabbath, the millennium, which, according to Jewish thought, was to close the six thousand years of the world's work-day history.

Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints] The words appear in the Book of Enoch, as spoken by an angel who interprets a vision which the Patriarch had received as foretelling the judgment of the last day. The latter words run in the Greek literally, **with His holy myriads**, probably with a reference to Deut. xxxiii. 2, the "saints" or "holy ones" here being not the disciples of Christ, but the "innumerable company of angels" (Heb. xii. 22; Ps. lxviii. 17).

15. *to execute judgment upon all...*] The following is given as a literal translation of the prophecy as it stands in the Book of Enoch: "And He cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones, that He may execute judgment upon them and destroy the ungodly, and may plead with all the carnal ones for all the things which sinners and the ungodly have done or wrought against Him." St Jude's version differs from this in the reiterated use of the word "ungodly" as noun, adjective, verb and adverb.

16. *These are murmurers, complainers...*] The first noun is not found elsewhere in the New Testament, but the use of cognate verbs and nouns in Matt. xx. 11; Luke v. 30; 1 Cor. x. 10; Acts vi. 1 and elsewhere, suggests that it refers primarily to the temper of a rebellious murmuring against human authority; in this case, probably, against that of the apostles and other appointed rulers of the Church. The Greek word for "complainers" has a more specific meaning, and means strictly **blamers of fate**, or, in modern phrase, **finding fault with Providence**. They took, as it were, a pessimist view of their lot of life, perhaps of the order of the world generally. The same word is used by Philo (*Vit. Mos.* p. 109) to describe the temper of the Israelites in the wilderness, and appears in the *Characters* of Theophrastus (c. XVII.) as the type of the extremest form of general discontent, which complains even of the weather.

walking after their own lusts] This stands in connexion with the foregoing as cause and effect. The temper of self-indulgence, recognising not God's will, but man's desires, as the law of action, is precisely that which issues in weariness and despair. The Confessions of the Preacher present the two elements often in striking combination (Eccles. ii. 1—20).

their mouth speaketh great swelling words] For the latter words and what they imply, see notes on 2 Pet. ii. 18.

having *men's* persons in admiration because of advantage.
17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken
18 before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that
they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who
19 should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they
20 who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. But

having men's persons in admiration] Literally, **admiring persons.** The phrase, which is a somewhat stronger form of the more familiar "accepting persons" (James ii. 1; Gal. ii. 6; Matt. xxii. 16) occurs in the LXX. of Gen. xix. 21; Lev. xix. 15. The temper characterised is that which fawns as in wondering admiration on the great, while all the time the flatterer is simply seeking what profit he can get out of him whom he flatters.

17. *remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles...*] The passage stands in close parallelism with 2 Pet. iii. 2, but differs in speaking only of "apostles" and not of prophets, and apparently also in referring only or chiefly to the predictions of the apostles and not to their commandments. If we could assume that 2 Peter was the earlier of the two Epistles, we might see in St Jude's language a reference to that of the Apostle. It will be noticed also that St Jude does not say, as St Peter does, "of *us* the apostles" (see, however, note on 2 Pet. iii. 2), and so far leaves it uncertain whether he includes himself.

18. *there should be mockers in the last time...*] The word for "mockers" is found in 2 Pet. iii. 3, but the general character of those described agrees with the picture drawn in 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Tim. iii. 1. St Jude, it will be noted, does not dwell on the specific form of mockery, the taunts as to the delay in the second coming of the Lord, on which St Peter lays stress.

walk after their own ungodly lusts] Literally, **after the lusts of their own impieties.** The last word adds a special feature to the description already given, in nearly the same words, in verse 16.

19. *These be they who separate themselves*] Many of the better MSS. omit the reflexive pronoun. The verb is not found elsewhere in the New Testament, but a simpler form, with the same meaning, occurs in Lev. xx. 24. It was characteristic of the false teachers and mockers who are spoken of that they drew lines of demarcation, which Christ had not drawn, between themselves and others, or between different classes of believers, those, e. g., who had the higher *gnosis*, or exercised a wider freedom (2 Pet. ii. 19), and those who were content to walk in "the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship" (Acts ii. 42). They lost sight of the unity of the Church of Christ and preferred the position of a sect or party; and, in so doing, united the exclusiveness of the Pharisees with the sensuous unbelief of the Sadducees.

sensual, having not the Spirit] The adjective is the same as that which describes the "natural man" of 1 Cor. ii. 14, and implies that the man lives in the full activity of his emotional and perceptive nature, without rising into the region of the reason and conscience which

ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of 21
God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto

belong to his spiritual being. "Sensual," or better perhaps, **sensuous**, is the nearest English equivalent, but, strictly speaking, it expresses the lower aspect of the character represented by the Greek term. The "sensuous" or **psychical** man is not necessarily "carnal" in the sense usually attached to that term, but the two words are closely connected with, and indeed overlap each other. The words seem specially directed against the boast of many of the Gnostic teachers, who, looking to St Paul's words in 1 Cor. ii. 14, boasted that they alone were "spiritual" in that Apostle's sense of the term, and that the members of the Church were, as the "natural" or "sensuous," incapable of knowing the higher mysteries of God (Iren. 1. 6. 2—4). St Jude retorts the charge, and says that they, who boast of their illumination, are in very deed destitute of every higher element of the religious life. The word for "Spirit" stands without the article in the Greek, and though this does not necessarily exclude the thought that the Spirit of God is spoken of, it is, perhaps, better to rest in the meaning that the false teachers were so absorbed in their lower, sensuous nature that they no longer possessed, in any real sense of the word, that element in man's compound being, which is itself spiritual, and capable therefore of communion with the Divine Spirit.

20. *building up yourselves on your most holy faith...*] Both the adjective, which is nowhere used of faith in its subjective sense, and St Jude's use of the substantive in verse 3, lead us to take "faith" in the objective sense, as nearly identical with "creed," which attaches to it in the later Epistles of the New Testament (1 Tim. v. 8 and perhaps 2 Tim. iv. 7). The readers of the Epistle are exhorted to take that faith as a foundation, and to erect on it the superstructure of a pure and holy life.

praying in the Holy Ghost] The precise combination is not found elsewhere in the New Testament, but the fact which it expresses corresponds with St Paul's language in Rom. viii. 26, and the almost identical phraseology of 1 Cor. xiv. 15. What is meant is the ecstatic outpouring of prayer in which the words of the worshipper seem to come as from the Spirit who "helpeth our infirmities" and "maketh intercession for us," it may be in articulate speech, it may be also as with "groanings that cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26). Here again we may recognise a side-glance at the false teachers. Not those who deserted the Church's faith for a life of impurity, but those who "built" on it a life of holiness, were capable of that height of devotion which is described as "praying in the Spirit."

21. *keep yourselves in the love of God...*] The words admit equally of being taken of our love for God, or God's love for us, but the latter meaning is more in harmony with the general tenor of Scripture, and, in particular, with our Lord's language ("continue ye in my love") in John xv. 9, and probably also St Paul's ("the love of Christ constraineth us") in 2 Cor. v. 14.

22 eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a dif-
23 ference: and others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ] The verb implies, as in Luke ii. 25, 38, xxiii. 51, that the "mercy" is thought of as in the future, and probably there is a special reference to the second coming of Christ as that which will manifest His mercy no less than His righteous judgment. There is no ground, however, for limiting it to this significance, and it may well include all acts of mercy to which men were looking forward in patient expectation, as in store for them during the remainder of their earthly pilgrimage.

The reference in this and the preceding verse (1) to the Holy Spirit, (2) to the Father, (3) to the Lord Jesus Christ, may be noted as shewing St Jude's witness to the "faith once delivered to the saints."

22. *And of some have compassion, making a difference...*] The MSS. present a strange variety of readings. Those of most authority give, *Some* **rebuke** (or **convict**, the same word as that used in John xvi. 8; Eph. v. 11) *when they* **debate** *with you* (participle in the accusative case). The Received Text rests on the evidence of later MSS., but it may be questioned whether the participle (in this case in the nominative), which is in the middle voice, can have the meaning of "making a difference," and even if we adopt that reading it would be better to render the word **rebuke, as you debate with them,** as with an implied reference to the same word as used in verse 9. Internal evidence, as far as it goes, agrees with the better MSS. There is more point in the contrast between the teachers who need a severe rebuke and those who may be saved with fear than in the two degrees of pity presented by the Received Text.

23. *and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire*] Here again the MSS. present a striking variation, those of most authority giving "others save, snatching them out of the fire, **and have compassion on others with fear.**" If we adopt this reading we have two classes of offenders brought before us, those who are to be saved as from the fire, as on the very verge of destruction, and those who are for some reason or other objects of a more tender pity, though they do not come within the range of immediate action. That pity, however, the context shews, was not to be accompanied by any tolerance of the evils into which they had fallen. In "snatching out of the fire" we have probably a reminiscence of the "brand plucked out of the fire" of Zech. iii. 2.

hating even the garment spotted by the flesh] The "garment" is the inner tunic worn next to the flesh, and therefore thought of as contaminated by its impurity, and it serves accordingly as a symbol of all outer habits of life that are affected by the inner foulness of the soul that is in bondage to the flesh. As men would loathe the touch of a defiled garment, bearing the stains of a cancerous ulcer, so they were to hate whatever was analogous to it in conduct (comp. Isaiah xxx. 22). The allusion to Zech. iii. 2 in the previous clause makes it probable that here also there is a reference to the "filthy garments;" polluted, i.e., with

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and 24
to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with
exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory 25
and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever.
Amen.

some ceremonial uncleanness, in which the high-priest Joshua the son of Josedech first appears in the prophet's vision. In the benediction of Rev. iii. 4 on those who "have not defiled their garments," we have the same imagery.

24. *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling*] Better, **able to keep you from stumbling.** See note on the difference between "stumbling" and "falling," on 2 Pet. i. 10. The form of the concluding doxology is determined naturally by the thoughts that have led up to it. The writer had been dwelling on the various ways in which men had stumbled and fallen. He now directs their thoughts to God as alone able to preserve them from a like disastrous issue.

to present you faultless before the presence of his glory] The adjective is a favourite one with St Paul (Eph. i. 4, v. 27; Phil. ii. 15; Col. i. 22) as describing the character of believers. In Heb. ix. 14 and 1 Pet. i. 19 it is used of the stainless purity of Christ. The "glory" spoken of is that which is to be manifested at the coming of Christ "in his own glory, and that of the Father, and of the Holy Angels" (Luke ix. 26). Comp. also Tit. ii. 13.

with exceeding joy] Both adjective and substantive are expressed in Greek by the one word for "exulting joy" in Luke i. 14, 44; Acts ii. 46.

25. *to the only wise God our Saviour...*] The form of the doxology in the Received Text presents a parallelism to that of 1 Tim. i. 17. The word "wise" is, however, omitted in many of the best MSS. In the use of the word "Saviour" as applied to God we have a parallelism with 1 Tim. ii. 3. The Father, no less than the Son, was thought of by both writers as the Saviour and Preserver of all men. The MSS. that omit "wise" add, for the most part, "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

be glory and majesty, dominion and power] The Greek has no verb, and the gap may be filled up either with the imperative of ascription or the indicative of assertion. The four words are brought together as expressing the aggregate of the Divine Omnipotence, the last word expressing the "power of authority," as distinct from that of energy. The better MSS. insert after "power" the words "before all time" (literally, **before the whole æon**), so that the doxology includes the past eternity as well as the future. In the words "for ever" we have literally **unto all the ages, or æons.**

The Epistle ends with the "Amen" which was the natural close of a doxology, and, like the Second Epistle of St Peter, contains no special messages or salutations. The letter was strictly a catholic, or encyclical, Epistle.

EXCURSUS ON THE BOOK OF ENOCH.

JUDE, VERSE 14.

The history of the book which bears this title is a sufficiently remarkable one. St Jude's reference to the prophecy of Enoch does not necessarily prove that he was acquainted with the book, but it at least shews the existence of traditions that had gathered round the patriarch's name. Allusions elsewhere to the fall of the angels (Justin, *Apol.* II. 5) or to the work of Enoch in preaching to them (Iren. IV. 6), or to his knowledge of astronomy (Euseb. *H. E.* VII. 32), in like manner do not indicate more than the widely diffused belief that he represented not only the holiness, but the science of the antediluvian world. The first Church writer who seems really to have known it is Tertullian (*De Hab. Mul.*, c. 3), who, after giving at length the story how the angels that fell were allured by the beauty of the daughters of men, adds that he knows that the Book (*scriptura*) of Enoch is rejected by some as not being admitted into the Jewish "Storehouse" of holy writings. He meets the supposed objection that such a book was not likely to have survived the deluge by the hypothesis that it might have been committed to the custody of Noah, and been handed down after him from one generation to another, or that he might have been specially inspired, if it had perished, to rewrite it, as Esdras was fabled (2 Esd. xiv. 38—48) to have re-written the whole Hebrew Canon. He defends his acceptance of it on the grounds (1) that it prophesied of Christ, and (2) that it had been quoted by St Jude. In another passage (*de Idol.* c. 15) he names Enoch as predicting certain superstitious practices of the heathen, and so as being the most ancient of all prophets. Augustine, on the other hand, adopting the view that the "sons of God" of Gen. vi. were righteous men who fell into the temptation of lust, rejects the book (which he clearly knew) as apocryphal, and while he admits the prophecy quoted by St Jude as authentic, dismisses all the rest as fabulous (*De Civ. Dei*, XV. 23). After this the book seems to have dropped out of sight, and it is not again referred to by any ecclesiastical writer. Fragments of it were found by Scaliger in the *Chronographia* of Georgius Syncellus, and printed by him in his notes on Eusebius in 1658. In 1773, however, Bruce, the Abyssinian explorer, brought over three copies which he had found in

the course of his travels, and one of these, presented to the Bodleian Library, was translated by Archbishop Lawrence and published in 1821. Another and more fully edited translation was published in German by Dillmann in 1853.

The book thus brought to light after an interval of some fourteen hundred years, bears no certain evidence of date, and has been variously assigned by different scholars, by Ewald to B.C. 144—120, by Dillmann to B.C. 110, while other scholars have been led by its reference to the Messiah to ascribe a post-Christian origin to it. As regards its contents, it is a sufficiently strange farrago. The one passage which specially concerns us is found in c. ii., and is thus rendered by Archbishop Lawrence. It comes as part of the first vision of Enoch: God will be manifested and the mountains shall melt in the flame, and then "Behold he comes with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment upon them, and to reprove all the carnal for everything which the wicked and ungodly have done and committed against him." In c. vii., viii. we have the legend of the loves of the angels and the birth of the giants, and the invention of arts and sciences. Then comes a prophecy of the deluge (c. x.), and visions of the city of God (c. xiv.), and the names of the seven angels (c. xx.). He sees the dwelling-place of the dead, both good and evil (c. xxii.), and the tree of life which had been in Eden (c. xxiv.), and a field beyond the Erythraean Sea in which is the tree of knowledge (c. xxxi.). Vision follows upon vision, until in c. xlvi. we have a reproduction of that in Dan. vii. of the Ancient of Days in the Son of Man, who is identified with the Messiah (c. xlvii.), the Chosen One of God. And so the book goes on, leaving on the reader's mind an impression like that of a delirious dream, with endless repetitions and scarcely the vestige of a plan or purpose. The reader of the English Apocrypha may find the nearest accessible approach to the class of literature which it represents in the Second Book of Esdras, but that, in its profound and plaintive pessimism, has at least the elements of poetry and unity of purpose. The Book of Enoch stands on a far lower level, and belongs to the class of writings in which the decay of Judaism was but too prolific, on which St Paul seems to pass a final sentence when he speaks of them as "old wives' fables" (1 Tim. iv. 7).

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